

**Exploring the Incorporation of the Leadership for Learning (LfL)  
Principles in Ghana: The Case of Two LfL Basic Schools in the Central  
Region**



**Raymond Chegedua Tangonyire**

Faculty of Education

University of Cambridge

This dissertation is submitted for the degree of

*Doctor of Philosophy*

**Jesus College**

**December 2018**

## **Abstract**

### **Exploring the Incorporation of the Leadership for Learning (LfL) Principles in Ghana: The Case of Two LfL Basic Schools in the Central Region**

Raymond Chegedua Tangonyire

Educational researchers, practitioners and policymakers agree that quality of leadership and learning influence the quality of education. In the context of Ghanaian basic schools, previous research has shown that the Leadership for Learning (LfL) framework, an educational theory and practice, has improved the leadership capacities of education stakeholders as well as the quality of teaching and learning. However, the processes which lead to such improvements have not yet been studied. This study aimed to contribute to research on LfL by analysing the processes that accounted for the successful incorporation of the LfL principles.

This in-depth case study was conducted in two successful LfL schools in the Central Region of Ghana. It engaged multiple stakeholders and gathered data through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document analysis. Intra- and inter-case analyses were conducted to understand each case in its own terms as well as to identify areas of convergence and divergence between them. The findings reveal that despite the ubiquity of household poverty, youth unemployment, and paucity of infrastructure, stakeholders recreated structures, reoriented attitudes, developed self-efficacy, and deployed creativity. It has been found that stakeholders were able to come to a shared and contextualised understanding of the LfL principles. This engendered collaboration, co-ownership of the leading, teaching and learning activities, and their successful institutional absorption. Put differently, the successful incorporation of the LfL principles was driven by four practices: the stakeholders understood the principles based on their contextual realities; believed in their understanding; taught what they believed in; and practised what they taught.

These findings are of practical relevance for policymakers and practitioners. Policymakers need to appreciate the importance of context in understanding and incorporating policy initiatives. Practitioners need to reorient their attitudes and practice, collaborate, form communal beliefs, and recognise, appreciate and harness their internal human capital to succeed. Further research is needed to understand the impact of communication technology – television soap operas, mobile phones and social media on leading, teaching and learning.

## **Acknowledgements**

### **Supervisor**

This work, from the start through to its logical conclusion, became possible because I received support from many people. I am wholeheartedly indebted to my supervisor, Dr Sue Swaffield for her wise, faithful and excellent guidance, advice and support throughout the PhD process. Her deep unreserved interest in my research as exemplified in the regular, convivial yet effective supervision, the invaluable suggestions and feedback, and patient trust have tremendously contributed to the successful completion of this thesis. I look forward to a life-long collaboration. My gratitude also goes to my advisor Dr Ros McLellan whose insights proved helpful during and after my fieldwork. With a thankful heart, I also acknowledge my field supervisor, Prof George K-T. Oduro for welcoming, preparing and guiding me throughout the course of the fieldwork.

### **Funding and academic support**

My sincerest gratitude also goes to the Cambridge Commonwealth European and International Trust for the financial support that enabled me to undertake the PhD project in Cambridge. I am also grateful to the Master and his wife, Professor and Mrs Ian White; Graduate tutor, Professor Tim Wilkinson; Director of Education, Professor Anna Vignoles; the staff, and entire family of Jesus College, to whom I say thank you for making Jesus College truly a home away from home. To the beloved staff – teaching and non-teaching, of the Faculty of Education, thank you for providing the enabling learning environment in which to pursue my PhD studies. I am particularly grateful to Emma Rixon, the PhD programme administrator, and to Angela Cutts and her Library team for their unparalleled professionalism, hospitality, and availability to support my academic needs.

### **Society of Jesus (Jesuit) companions**

To my religious family, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) whom I represent, I am thankful for the many years of care and nurture that enabled me to be more human and to pursue everything for the greater glory of God. Fr Jude Odiaka, SJ thank you for missioning me to Cambridge to undertake the MPhil programme in Educational Leadership, and for everything you did during my PhD journey that helped me to become a better person, Christian, and Jesuit. Very Rev Fr Chukwuyenum Afiawari, SJ, since you took over as my Provincial Superior, you threw everything behind me to ensure my wellbeing and enable successful completion of my PhD project. Please, accept my heartfelt gratitude for your understanding, encouragement, fraternal care, and trust. These made all the difference. I also want to thank Fr Emmanuel Ugwejeh, SJ for providing an excellent reference for me during my MPhil application to Cambridge University. My gratitude also goes to Fr Michael Holman, SJ, my Jesuit Community superior, Fr Richard Salmi, SJ and all the members of Copleston House for their support. Without the continued mentoring, moral, and emotional support from Br Alan Harrison, SJ; Frs Donald Hinfey, SJ; Timothy Baghrmwin, SJ; Kyaligonza Lawrence Achal, SJ; Kevin Odey, SJ; Festo Mkenda, SJ; and Chikere Ugwuanyi, SJ, I would not have been able to take this project to its logical end. Frs Kpanie, Itua, Edmund, Jado, Reginal, Marcel, and scholastic Evans, thank you for your friendship.

**Research collaborators**

This project would not have been possible without the authorities of Ghana Education Service who permitted me to conduct my fieldwork in the Central Region. I am also indebted to all the participants of my research, especially headteachers, teachers and pupils whose hospitality and generosity made it possible for me to have a successful fieldwork experience. My gratitude goes to Dr Rosemary Bosu, the then Director of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the University of Cape Coast for identifying the schools for my research.

**Friends**

I thank Most Rev Palmer Buckle, Archbishop of Cape Coast for his unrelenting encouragement and support throughout my PhD project. Monsignor Myers, Fr Kodelogo, Fr Magesa, Professor and Mrs Awusabo-Asare, Dr & Dr Amenga-Etego, Mr Lateef Paridava, Professor and Mrs Agyeman, Professor and Dr Kuupole, Justice and Mrs Pwamang, Mr and Mrs Ntim, Dr and Dr Adebulegbe, Mr and Mrs Buckle, Fr Darlington, Dr Abram, Mr and Mrs Torku, Ms Hendra, Mr and Mrs Foam, Dr Pauline Essah, I appreciate your friendship, trust, and support. To Gill Althia Francis and Julian Summerschuh, thank you for your unconditional friendship. I wish you the very best in your own PhD projects.

**Family**

To my dear family, thank you for your continued faith in me, and for your love, encouragement and support.

## **Dedication**

To my beloved and irreplaceable brother, friend and mentor, Rev Fr Isidore K Bonabom, SJ (R.I.P), Rev Frs Dermot Preston, SJ, Nicholas Austin, SJ, Col and Mrs John Hobson, and Mr and Mrs John Bentum-William.

## Table of contents

List of figures.....	<b>xi</b>
List of Tables .....	<b>xii</b>
List of Abbreviations/glossary of terms.....	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Educators and the issues of education in Ghana .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Introduction .....	5
Quality education: rise in demand, challenge of definition and purpose .....	6
The pressing issues of education in Ghana .....	9
Household income poverty and the issues of access, retention, and learning .....	9
School leadership challenge .....	12
Teachers and teaching challenge .....	14
Attitude of interpersonal mistrust and spirit of servility in Ghana .....	14
The LfL and the Ghanaian basic education.....	16
Summary .....	18
<b>Chapter 3. Developing a critical awareness of Leadership for Learning and educational change implementation.....</b>	<b>20</b>
Introduction .....	20
Dissecting leadership.....	21
Definitions .....	21
Theoretical debates .....	22
Dissecting learning.....	25
Definitions .....	25
Theories of learning.....	26
Leadership for Learning: the challenge of conceptualisation .....	27
Interpreting Leadership for Learning .....	28
The Carpe Vitam's interpretation of LfL and application.....	31
Implementing educational change.....	34
Summary .....	37
<b>Chapter 4. Research design.....</b>	<b>38</b>
Introduction and research questions .....	38
Epistemological assumptions .....	39
Interpretivist research strategies.....	39

Qualitative case study.....	40
Case study: definitions and principles.....	41
Types of case study .....	43
Single and multiple case designs.....	44
Critiquing case studies research .....	45
Ethics: the significant rational other - consideration for, feeling and acting with .....	46
Summary .....	48
<b>Chapter 5. Implementing the research design .....</b>	<b>49</b>
Introduction .....	49
Preliminary phase.....	49
Mini piloting in Cambridge .....	49
Justifying research sites in Ghana .....	50
Accessing the research sites .....	51
Trialling the research design: lessons for the main research .....	52
Main study phase.....	54
Composition of research schools .....	54
Profiles of research participants .....	56
Data collection methods .....	58
Data collection in school A and B .....	61
Reflexivity: Epiphanic ethical and methodological challenges and how they were .....	64
handled.....	64
Managing and analysing data on-field.....	67
Analysing data off-field in Cambridge .....	70
Summary .....	72
<b>Chapter 6. Institutionalisation of the LfL principles: case by case story .....</b>	<b>73</b>
Introduction .....	73
School A and the story of LfL incorporation .....	73
School B and the story of LfL incorporation .....	76
Summary .....	80
<b>Chapter 7. Participants' perceptions about the Leadership for Learning principles .....</b>	<b>82</b>
Introduction .....	82
Seeking perceptions about the LfL principles through underpinning key words .....	82
Learning and focus on learning as participants understand them .....	83
Participants' dissection of learning.....	84
Importance and characteristics of learning .....	85

Focus on learning as everyone owning and prioritising learning .....	87
Dialogue and a learning dialogue through the participants' lens .....	89
Participants' definition of dialogue .....	89
Characteristics, dimensions, spaces and importance of dialogue .....	90
Learning dialogue as relationship for learning .....	92
Learning dialogue and school as 'heart' of individual, family and community .....	93
Leadership and what sharing it means for the participants .....	95
Leadership as a position of trust .....	95
Leadership metaphor and characteristics .....	97
What sharing leadership means .....	98
Accountability and what sharing it means .....	98
Dissecting accountability: definitions .....	98
Purposes, characteristics, types, and spaces of accountability .....	100
What sharing accountability means .....	102
The LfL principles: participants' holistic view .....	103
Summary .....	104
<b>Chapter 8. Incorporating the LfL principles: participants' insights .....</b>	<b>105</b>
Introduction .....	105
The headteachers and the LfL principles: a transformative relationship .....	105
The LfL and school communities: new thinking, new beliefs .....	106
Inculcating the 'we can do it and do it well' self-reconceptualization.....	108
The individual, family and community as constitutive aspects of the school.....	111
Leaving no one behind the school's leading and learning voyage.....	113
Carrying everyone along within the school: in the classroom.....	113
Carrying everyone along: at the school-wide level .....	120
Carrying everyone along: outside the school walls .....	124
Summary .....	125
<b>Chapter 9. Practising the LfL-induced beliefs: impacts.....</b>	<b>126</b>
Introduction .....	126
Attitudinal change .....	126
Improvement in personal attitudes .....	126
Improvement in professional commitment.....	128
Improvement in teacher professional development .....	130
Improvement in physical environment and facilities .....	131
Improvement in interpersonal relationships .....	134



Within school.....	135
Outside school .....	137
Pupils' integral growth .....	139
Summary .....	141
<b>Chapter 10. Opportunities and threats to the LfL incorporation .....</b>	<b>143</b>
Introduction .....	143
Opportunities seized.....	143
Availability of motivated individuals with good conscience yearning for change .....	143
Availability of competent and committed teachers .....	145
Cordial interpersonal relationships .....	147
Challenges faced .....	148
Challenging socio-cultural and economic background of parents and pupils .....	149
Ubiquity of youth unemployment and fatalistic attitude towards social mobility .....	151
Prevailing communications' technology .....	152
Summary .....	157
<b>Chapter 11. Discussion of the findings .....</b>	<b>158</b>
Introduction .....	158
Key findings of the research: summary and sources .....	158
The key themes.....	161
Familiarity with and shared perception of the LfL principles .....	161
Re-orientating attitudes and re-creating structures inspire embrace of the principles ...	168
Collaborative action is a key lever for change implementation .....	176
Motivation and cordial relationships can overcome paucity of infrastructure .....	179
Household poverty, illiteracy and unemployment are threats to change.....	182
implementation .....	182
Modern technology is both incentive and inhibitive to school improvement initiatives	186
Summary .....	192
<b>Chapter 12. The 'And so what?' question: implications for theory, methodology, policy and practice .....</b>	<b>193</b>
Introduction .....	193
Theorising the LfL principles.....	193
Leadership for Learning: an audacity-driven theory and practice.....	193
Meaning of Leadership for Learning principles .....	195
Leadership for Learning principles through the world of the participants .....	196
Implications: methodology, policy and practice .....	200

Methodological implications .....	201
Policy and practice implications .....	203
<b>Summary</b> .....	206
<b>Chapter 13. Summary and conclusions</b> .....	<b>207</b>
Summary .....	207
Conclusions .....	208
Implications .....	209
Theoretical and practical knowledge generation .....	209
Methodological knowledge generation .....	211
Enriching policy .....	211
Enkindling practice .....	212
Opening windows to future research .....	212
Work worth the pain .....	212
<b>References</b> .....	214
<b>Appendices</b> .....	239
Appendix 1. Approval letter for trialling .....	239
Appendix 2. Approval letter for main research .....	240
Appendix 3. Sample of informed consent form .....	241
Appendix 4. Essay on road accidents by pupil BS2 .....	243
Appendix 5. Mapping the research questions to the research participants .....	246
Appendix 6. Mapping research instruments to the research questions .....	247
Appendix 7. Mapping research instruments to the research participants .....	248
Appendix 8. The one-on-one interview protocols .....	249
Appendix 9. Focus group discussions protocol .....	253
Appendix 10. Classroom observation coding scheme .....	254
Appendix 11. Sample of an observation grid: creating a learning dialogue .....	268
Appendix 12. Summary of research analytic themes and sources .....	269

## List of figures

Figure 3.1 How leadership relates to student learning based on (Hallinger & Heck, 1996) ...	28
Figure 3.2 A synthesised model of Leadership for Learning (Hallinger, 2011, p. 127).....	28
Figure 3.3 Carpe Vitam's conceptual framework of LfL based on Swaffield and MacBeath (2009).....	32
Figure 4.1 A holistic multiple case study with embedded units based on Yin (2014) .....	45
Figure 4.2 Summary of my research design .....	46
Figure 5.1 The map of Ghana indicating the Central Region .....	50
Figure 5.2 A tree of node and child nodes or sub-themes in NVivo .....	69
Figure 6.1 Images indicating the presence of the LfL story in school A.....	73
Figure 6.2 Images indicating the presence of the LfL story in school B .....	77
Figure 7.1 The new conception of a school .....	93
Figure 7.2 The old conception of a school.....	94
Figure 8.1 Condition of classroom before facelift (February 2017) .....	110
Figure 8.2 Condition of classroom after facelift (March 2017).....	111
Figure 8.3 Picture showing peer-tutoring on how to weave during break hour .....	118
Figure 8.4 Pictures of pupils doing group study and a sample of Junior Graphic .....	119
Figure 8.5 Pictures of pupils carrying out a group project and the result.....	119
Figure 8.6 Summary of how LfL principles were institutionalised .....	125
Figure 9.1 State of classroom buildings before 2014 .....	132
Figure 9.2 State of buildings after 2014.....	132
Figure 9.3 Pictures of unimproved and improved footpath to school B .....	134
Figure 9.4 A picture showing a building renovated by alumni.....	139
Figure 10.1 A picture showing a local information centre .....	155
Figure 10.2 Pictures showing sports betting centres.....	156

## List of Tables

Table 2.1 Patterns of enrolment by gender in sub-Saharan Africa (Lewin, 2015, p. 53) .....	11
Table 2.2 LfL in relation to issues of basic education in Ghana.....	17
Table 3.1 Characteristics of transformational leadership (Shields, 2010, p. 26) .....	30
Table 5.1 Sampling techniques and criteria for inclusion of participants.....	53
Table 5.2 Comparison of school A and B .....	55
Table 5.3 Participants, gender, length of time in school A and with GES .....	57
Table 5.4 Participants, gender, length of time in school B and with GES.....	57
Table 5.5 Documents analysed and reasons for inclusion .....	61
Table 5.6 Participants and research methods deployed .....	62
Table 5.7 LfL principles and the Cohen's kappa statistics .....	71
Table 12.1 LfL principles and descriptors for classroom observations .....	202

## **List of Abbreviations/glossary of terms**

ADP:	Accelerated Development Programme
BECE:	Basic Education Certificate Examination
BERA:	British Educational Research Association
CCE:	Centre for Commonwealth Education
CCO:	Corso Concorso Ordinario
CS:	Circuit Supervisor
CV:	Carpe Vitam
DfID:	Department for International Development
EFA:	Education For All
EMS:	English, Mathematics and Science
FCUBE:	Free Compulsory, Universal Basic Education
FGDs:	Focus Group Discussions
FS	Fully sighted
GES:	Ghana Education Service
GER:	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GLSS:	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GPI:	Gender Parity Index
GSS:	Ghana Statistical Service
HT:	Headteacher
HIV & AIDS:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICT:	Information Communications and Technology
IEPA:	Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
IL:	Instructional Leadership
INSET:	In-service Training
IRR:	Inter Rater Reliability
ISSER:	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
JHS:	Junior High School
LfL:	Leadership for Learning
NERP:	New Educational Reform Programme
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisations
NSCE:	New Structure and Content of Education
PA:	Parent of School A

PB:	Parent of School B
Pp:	Pupils
Ps:	Parents
PTA:	Parent-Teacher Association
PREP:	Primary Education Programme
RQs:	Research Questions
SES:	Socio-Economic Status
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SHS:	Senior High School
SMC:	School Management Committee
SSA:	Sub-Sahara Africa
STLs:	School Transformational Leaders
TL:	Transformational Leadership
TLMs:	Teaching and Learning Materials
Ts:	Teachers
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UN:	United Nations
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
VI:	Visually Impaired
WSD:	Whole School Development

## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

I have spent about four decades of my life so far in educational contexts in Africa learning, teaching and leading, and I anticipate continuing my professional future in such contexts. Between 1996 and 2012, I had my tertiary studies in Ghana – West Africa, Zimbabwe – Southern Africa, and Kenya – East Africa. During these sixteen years, I had the opportunity to learn, teach, and lead in pre-tertiary educational institutions across Africa including Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia. This exposure afforded me substantial knowledge of the realities of education in Africa. Despite some inter-country differences in education provision, there are some realities that are commonplace. Regarding opportunities, one commonality is the drive people have for quality education.

There are also convergences regarding challenges including the prevalence of top-down internal and external accountability, poor school leadership, and teacher-centred pedagogies. The effect of these challenges has been poor quality education exemplified in poor learning outcomes. A common reality I encountered and recall with pain, was the continual lament of parents, governments, students and lovers of education of the lack of the necessary quality in the education systems to promote human and national development.

While studying theology in Kenya, I was moved by these challenges to reflect on what contribution I could make to improve the quality of education in Africa. Given that I envisage dedicating my continuing professional life to African educational contexts, it was clear to me that deepening my competence in educational leadership and school improvement could equip me to make the required contribution. Upon my return to my native Ghana in 2012, my aspirations were encouraged by witnessing the ubiquitous desire for better quality education and the need for improvement in the educational system. Listen to any discourse on education in Ghana today, be it on the air waves, television, social and print media, or among people including illiterate men and women selling their wares in the market and what is common is the unreserved yearning for quality education. The popular disposition is therefore in accordance with my view and also with the spirit of Anamuah-Mensah's (2002) Committee that reviewed Ghana's education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the 2008 Education Act 778. Quality education is strategically positioned and stressed in the 2010-2020 education sector plan which provides the concrete directions for its pursuit. Rhodes and Brundrett (2010) opine that the impulse of governments to improve the quality of their educational systems to achieve improved pupil outcomes has been a key driver of change in many countries.

Improving pupils' learning achievements is about school improvement because as Hopkins (2002) states school improvement concerns educational change that aims ultimately to enhance student learning as well as strengthen the capacity of schools to manage change. It gives particular salience to the processes leading towards change which emphasises a collegial environment for collaboration, professional relations, teacher development and improvement in student behaviour, learning, and achievement (Stein, 2000).

Over the years successive governments and Ghana's development partners have implemented series of school improvement programmes especially at the basic level – primary and junior secondary education. The primary education programme of 1990; quality improvement in primary schools of 1997; whole school development of 1998; and the basic education sector improvement programme of 2004 are some examples of such efforts. As Acheampong (2004) avers the USAID's<sup>1</sup> primary education programme and DfID's whole school programme are two examples of interventions which emphasised school improvement through the provision of leadership, teaching and learning. The current awareness of the need for quality education among ordinary Ghanaians is therefore more than welcome news.

However, the fact that talk about the need for quality education in Ghana is ubiquitous also implies that it remains to be achieved. Relating the issue to the above education reform programmes, Pansiri (2011) attributes the failure to improve quality education to implementers' loss of focus on the real problems and policy dislocation within the contexts interventions were being applied. But it is simplistic to solely place the burden on this problem because as Antwi (1992) remarks in *Education, society and development in Ghana*, the education improvement efforts are pursued within a complex backdrop of colonial legacies, economic challenges, and climatic and ethnolinguistic diversity. These contribute to the challenges of achieving quality education. Later research indicates that challenges of household poverty (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015), poor school leadership (Zame, Hope, & Respress, 2008; Oduro, 2009; Amakyi & Ampah-Mensah, 2013), and poor teachers and teaching (Boeh-Ocansey, 1997; Kadingdi, 2006) have considerably inhibited efforts aimed at improving the quality of education.

These challenges warranted the introduction of the Leadership for Learning (LfL) programme into public basic schools in 2009. The programme aims to build leadership capacity for headteachers, teachers, and pupils to assist them to improve the quality of

---

<sup>1</sup> USAID represents the United States Agency for International Development and DfID denotes the United Kingdom Department for International Development.



leading, teaching and learning. It was as a result of my exploration of empirical researches on this programme during and after my MPhil studies in the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, I became familiar with the LfL philosophy of education and its relevance to education in Ghana. In analysing empirical works by Jull, Swaffield and MacBeath (2014) and Malakolunthu, MacBeath, and Swaffield (2014) on the LfL programme and its impacts on Ghanaian basic schools, I was inspired to undertake this in-depth interpretivist qualitative case study research. While impressed by the impacts these researchers reported, I realised something crucial was missing, the daily processes which engendered the impacts. By processes, I refer to relational dynamics of the schools, the way stakeholders understand the principles of the LfL framework, teach and practise them, and factors which promote or inhibit their incorporation. I argue that these processes when understood, could be shared with practitioners and policymakers to improve education in Ghana and beyond. They could add to the pool of knowledge on leadership, learning, and school change implementation literature. Overall, conducting this study provides a great opportunity for me to explore, think, and rethink what leadership and learning really mean not only in theory but also in practice and within an LfL-defined context fitted to the multiple and various Ghanaian conditions and culture. Filling this research gap with meaningful data about the processes was the underlying rationale for undertaking this research.

The thesis is organised into thirteen chapters, of which this chapter is the first. Chapter two is a reflection on the issues of education in Ghana and considers the government, family/community and school-level factors which influence quality education provision. Chapter three develops a critical awareness of the concept of Leadership for Learning and educational change implementation where leadership and learning are explored in their atomic as well as conjoined forms as Leadership for Learning. Different interpretations and applications of LfL are also considered. I elucidate and justify the research design including the rationale for choosing a qualitative case study strategy for the research in chapter four. This includes the data sources and methodological considerations which served as a compass for capturing the data. The implementation of the research design which includes analysing and interpreting data is explained in chapter five. Chapter six provides a case by case story of the institutionalisation of the LfL principles. Chapters seven to ten present inter-case findings in relation to the research questions. While chapter seven is a narrative of the findings relating to research question one, which seeks stakeholders' perception about the LfL principles, chapter eight presents findings emerging from how stakeholders have put the principles into practice – research question two. Chapter nine reflects on impacts which

resulted from the incorporation of the LfL principles. In chapter ten, the prevailing opportunities and challenges to the institutionalisation of the principles – research questions three and four, are presented. I put the findings into dialogue with existing literature in chapter eleven. In chapter twelve, the ‘And so what?’ question – that is, the implications of this research to theory, policy and practice, are reflected upon. Finally, in chapter thirteen, I summarise and conclude the research.

## Chapter 2. Educators and the issues of education in Ghana

### Introduction

The sub-Sahara West African country of Ghana is bounded in the south by the Gulf of Guinea and in the north, east and west respectively, by the francophone states of Burkina Faso, Togo, and Cote d'Ivoire. Over the years the people of Ghana and their Ghanaian governments of every style have increasingly acknowledged the crucial role of education in achieving Ghana's human and national development. The critical role of education in providing individuals with necessary knowledge, occupational skills, creativity, innovation and a cultural attitude cannot be overemphasised (Anamuah-Mensah, 2002). The Government of Ghana, in the growth and poverty reduction strategy paper (National Development Planning Commission, 2005), reiterates this pivotal role of education in achieving high productivity and economic success. This strategy paper asserts that the logic and evidence of pursuing ambitious education development is "totally irresistible" (p. 8). Thus, the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for policy formulation, developed a twelve-year (2003-2015) plan to provide an education policy framework for developing and improving education especially at the basic and secondary levels (Bosu, Dare, Dachi, & Fertig, 2011). When governments changed hands in 2008, this plan was replaced by a ten-year education strategic plan (2010-2020), which is the most recent main policy document that guides education policy in Ghana. This new plan has, *inter alia*, prioritised provision of access to education and improving the quality of teaching and learning to provide enhanced pupil achievement (Palmer, 2010).

However, policymakers, and educators – headteachers, teachers, and parents have been facing all kinds of pressing socio-economic issues that depress their efforts to provide quality education. This chapter reflects on these issues and how the LfL Ghana programme, an educational improvement programme within which this research is formulated, relates to them. The chapter is organised into three parts. Part one critically reflects on the issue of quality education where the rise in demand for it, challenges of defining it and what its purpose is, are considered. Part two identifies interconnected issues from the family-level (poverty), and school-level (leadership and teaching challenges) which affect student learning outcomes. Part three reflects on the LfL programme vis-à-vis these issues especially its contribution to improving leadership, teaching, and learning.

## **Quality education: rise in demand, challenge of definition and purpose**

The quest for quality education may not have been new in national and international educational endeavours but its appreciation by governments and international development partners as key to achieving sustainable development has been intensified in recent years. This is because research and experiential evidence have shown that a mere expansion in enrolment of children in school does not lead to a higher level of education unless it is accompanied by quality education which can keep them in school (UNESCO, 2000). In the Dakar World Forum on Education For All – EFA, the need for quality education was stressed as evidenced in the goals two, five and six of the forum (King, 2007) and in goal 4 of the 17 United Nations’ Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals (SDGs). Therefore, quality education has received considerable attention in policy space and international fora. But what does it really mean?

As mentioned above, the term quality education is in common use but its exact meaning lacks any clarity and I think this is perhaps because of the concept’s vulnerability to contextual usage and interpretation. I wonder for example, whether when Ghana’s government and the UN talk about quality education, they mean the same thing. Furthermore, does quality education carry the same meaning within goal 4 of the SDGs and the earlier goal 6 of the Dakar framework for action? The interpretation of quality education is contextual and complex since the quality has to be gauged through the lens of the dynamic concept of education itself. I think it is logical to say that quality of education by default, is complex, and as Sheykhjan (2015) states, its conceptualisation depends on the changing contexts, new understandings and challenges of education as a whole. It is, therefore, important to consider what quality education is within the context of the Ghanaian education system which is my primary interest.

When I reflect on the three main educational reforms in Ghana – the 1951 and 61 Accelerated Development Plans (ADP) for education, the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) reform of 1974, and the 1987 New Educational Reform Programme (NERP), I realise that they embed efforts which aim at both the provision of equitable access to, and improvement of the quality of education. This must have been based on the realisation of the importance of preparing pupils who will be intellectually and economically different from those without formal education. These reforms do not give a specific definition of quality education but they link it to the process that can lead to the production of basic school graduates with employable skills. Guided by the objective of the Education Act 778 to

establish an education system that can produce well-balanced individuals, the Ghana Statistical Service – GSS (2013) says that quality education involves the production of a well-educated, skilled and informed Ghanaian population that is capable of transforming Ghana's economy for wealth creation and poverty reduction. This definition is quite general, and it makes me perceive quality education to mean the production of graduates who are competitive locally and globally in solving Ghana's prevailing socio-economic, technological, leadership, and political problems; and graduates who are knowledge producers rather than consumers, creators of employment rather than waiting to be employed.

However, the question is whether this definition carries the same meaning across the different tiers of the Ghanaian educational system – basic, senior high and tertiary levels, or whether it means different things at the different levels. If quality education has the same meaning across the different sub-sectors of education, it means that basic school graduates, like those of tertiary education, should have been well-educated, skilled and informed, and be able to create wealth and solve the socio-economic problems of Ghana. If it has different meanings and purposes for the various sub-sectors, it means that quality education will have to be clearly defined for each sub-sector. I argue that quality education is essentially the same whether it is considered from the lens of basic, secondary or tertiary education but the specific goals that are targeted may not necessarily be the same. For example, basic school graduates can be skilled enough to create jobs or solve some of the socio-economic problems if, as Bruner (1977) states, the curriculum is built around contextually relevant issues, principles and values; and students learn the fundamental structure of the subjects. This does not mean that the skills and expertise of a basic school graduate will be equal to those of a PhD graduate. However, the idea is that if pupils in basic schools effectively learn the essentials of any subject be it mathematics, physics, literature or carpentry, these essentials remain with them and at whatever stage they end their education, they will be able to apply such essentials to solve problems they encounter (Bruner, 1977). I have seen examples of such scenarios in sports or the entertainment industries where children who learnt the fundamentals of certain sports such as table tennis, football, or movie acting, have become considerably skilled in their teens.

This notwithstanding, I am aware that the dynamics of picking the essentials in subjects such as medicine, engineering, and law, and becoming well skilled at the end of basic school are not comparable to sports and entertainment. The processes of inculcation and appropriation are different. I am yet to meet a basic school graduate who is competent enough to practise as a medical doctor. It takes a long period of training to gain adequate skills,

knowledge and understanding to be able to practise medicine. In reality, at least in the context of Ghana, for a myriad of reasons including poor teaching and learning (Palmer, 2010), basic school graduates are not adequately skilled to be employable, create wealth or solve problems.

It would, however, be reductionist to limit the quality of basic education to the acquisition of employable skills. Quality basic education also involves adequately preparing students at each tier for ascendance to a further educational tier through teaching, learning, leading and assessment practices until they become adequately refined, skilled and knowledgeable in their selected academic disciplines. This foundation laying aspect of quality basic education nuances the notions of growth or sustainability in education. The idea of education as growth was a central theme in Dewey's (1916) *Democracy and education: an introduction to the philosophy of education* where he uses the term 'growth' in the sense of improving our intelligence and our opportunities for further experience (Popp, 2015). This idea of growth is suggested in Bruner's (1977) concept of 'spiral curriculum' where he talks about repeatedly revisiting the fundamental ideas of curriculum and building upon them as curriculum develops until students have a full grasp of the ideas. So Bruner's spiral curriculum is about sustaining growth in our intelligence and experience through a well-coordinated curriculum from the basic to higher levels of education.

This sustainability should be anchored in teaching and learning in our contemporary knowledge societies because as Hargreaves (2003) remarks teaching and learning are key to preparing pupils continuously to create and apply new knowledge. The idea of continuity connects to the extreme importance of the idea of sustainability in learning (Boud & Soler, 2016). It is important to ask, what educational practices are needed to form and sustain pupils who will be able to operate effectively in a complex society? From such a viewpoint, sustainability is linked to effectively preparing pupils not just for immediate educational requirements, but also for what might be required in the future (Boud & Soler, 2016). Sustainable assessment is crucial to sustainable learning because such assessment aims not only to meet the needs of the present, in terms of the demands of formative and summative assessment, but also prepares pupils to meet their own future learning needs (Swaffield, 2011). Similarly, drawing on the research of 30 years of educational leadership in eight United States and Canadian high schools, Hargreaves and Fink (2006) believe that sustainable leadership is also key to sustainable learning.

Sustainable educational leadership "preserves and develops deep learning for all that spreads and lasts, in ways that create positive benefit now and in the future" (Hargreaves &

Fink, 2006, p. 42). The notions of ‘spiral curriculum’, sustainable teaching, assessment and learning, and leading, fit together well as crucial ingredients in the recipe for quality education especially at the basic level. As I will explain in chapter 3, leadership and learning are core to education and so, how they are theorised and practised is key to our understanding of what quality basic education represents in Ghana. Therefore, drawing from the above discussion, I argue that quality basic education is both a means and an end. As a means it involves the processes of teaching, learning, assessing and leading, which equip pupils with the ability to create, innovate, think critically and be independent minded. As an end, it denotes the ability to apply these skills to meet personal and communal needs. However, quality education has not yet been achieved in Ghana because of some pressing issues.

## **The pressing issues of education in Ghana**

### **Household income poverty and the issues of access, retention, and learning**

Even though Ghana is rich in natural resources such as gold, cocoa, timber, and crude oil, it is categorised as one of the poor countries in the world because it has been unable to harness these resources for wealth creation. The GSS (2015) states that there has been some level of improvement in the reduction of national poverty but household income poverty remains widespread, particularly among the fisherfolk. What this means, according to Ferreira, Jolliffe and Prydz (2015) on a blog hosted by the World Bank’s chief economist entitled, ‘Let’s talk development’<sup>2</sup>, is that there are many poor households in Ghana that live below the international poverty line of \$1. 90 per day in purchasing power parity terms. The consequences of this telling level of poverty are manifested in problems of housing, child access to school, demand for child labour, gender discrimination, over-age enrolment, low pupil retention, and poor learning. An empirical research study recently conducted on child prostitution in Ghana by Oduro (2018) titled “Gold between my legs” places the high prevalence of this canker squarely on household poverty.

In their empirical research that considered household decision-making in relation to children’s education in the Western, Brong Ahafo, and Upper West regions of Ghana, Awedoba, Yoder, Fair, and Gorin (2003) conclude that some poor parents do not see schooling as a worthwhile economic investment and are not keen on enrolling their children in school. This is because parents consider income-earning activities such as farming, fishing

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/international-poverty-line-has-just-been-raised-190-day-global-poverty-basically-unchanged-how-even>

and hawking of goods to be more economically advantageous. In situations where poor households rely on labour intensive livelihoods for survival, there is high demand for child labour and this, according to the GSS (2003), has competed or interfered with access to schooling, retention, and learning.

Irrespective of how the phrase ‘access to schooling or education’ is interpreted and applied, Avotri (2000) and Lewin and Akyeampong (2009) lament that the girl-child is the most affected in situations where economic affordability is an issue because parents tend to favour boys. Coming from a patriarchal, male-dominated cultural context, I can identify with these authors and one reason that underpins parents’ preferential option for boys over girls in terms of enrolment in school is the culturally-held view that boys are heirs of the family who sustain the family’s lineage through marriage and procreation. The girls also can marry and procreate, but the belief is that once girls are married, they become members of someone else’s family, which is why in patriarchal ethnic groups such as the Kassena of northern Ghana, couples aspire for at least, one of their children to be a male. From the lens of justice and human dignity, this discriminatory belief is unjustified because as human beings no person’s sexual composition should reduce or replace their fundamental rights to equal treatment, including access to education. Experientially, such cultural beliefs are logically untenable because in Ghana and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, I have witnessed situations where girls have proved to be more useful in terms of provision of economic, social and emotional support to their parental homes than boys.

I think that international organisations including the United Nations, and national governments may have held the same philosophy of equal treatment for all, which is why they have striven to correct the anomaly of discriminating against the education of the girl-child. As Lewin (2015) states in *Educational access, equity, and development: planning to make rights realities*, most countries have now committed to achieving gender equity in education. As a result, in sub-Saharan Africa the gender parity index, which denotes the ratio of the gross enrolment of girls against that of boys, has improved. However, on average, the enrolment and retention rate of boys still exceed that of girls (Lewin, 2015). The table below shows the patterns of enrolment by gender in sub-Saharan Africa.



**Table 2.1 Patterns of enrolment by gender in sub-Saharan African (Lewin, 2015, p. 53)**

Cluster	Description	Countries
1	Girls account for less than 45 per cent in Grade 1 with a decline to less than 30 per cent by Grade 10	Angola, Benin, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria
2	Girls account for between 45 per cent and 50 per cent of enrolments in Grades 1 to 6, with a decline above Grade 6 to below 45 per cent above Grade 9	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone
3	Girls account for between 45 per cent and 50 per cent of enrolments at Grades 1 to 6, with an increase above 50 per cent after grade 6	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Mauritius, and South Africa
4	Girls consistently account for between 47 per cent and 53 per cent of enrolments across all grades	Cameroon, Gambia, <b>Ghana</b> , Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Zambia

In table 2.1 above, Ghana falls into 'cluster 4' where girls consistently account for between 47 and 53 per cent of enrolments across all grades. Even though this trend needs further improvement, it is a better situation compared to Ghana's northern neighbour, Burkina Faso where girls account for between 45 and 50 per cent of enrolments in grades 1 to 6, and an even lower percentage after grade 9. I think the improved girl-child enrolment situation in Ghana is one of the fruits of the government of Ghana's 1995 free compulsory, universal basic education (FCUBE) initiative and the 2005 capitation grant of US\$3 per enrolled child. These 'fee-free' government interventions, according to Akyeampong (2009) aim at abolishing all forms of fees in basic education to ensure that all children have access to school. These interventions helped to improve enrolments in public basic schools (Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, 2008). However, some children are still left out of school because parents are unable to afford the school levies, transport, school uniforms, and exercise books for their children (Akyeampong, Rolleston, Ampiah, & Lewin, 2011). Therefore, access to school remains an issue and is predominantly linked to household poverty.

Children dropping out of school is another consequence of poverty. Palmer (2010) says that 86 per cent of pupils enrolled in school complete the primary cycle; 65 per cent complete junior high (lower secondary) and only 34 per cent complete senior high (upper secondary). One reason that accounts for the low retention of children as they ascend the higher stages of education is child labour. A large survey on child labour (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014) found that 86 per cent of Ghanaian children (5-14 years) are involved in child labour and that 55 per cent of this work is hazardous to their health and education. From my experience, combining schooling with work, including farming, household chores, and selling of goods, can negatively impact punctuality arriving at school and motivation in class because such

work is often physically draining. Yet, children combine schooling and work because the earnings from their work are considered by parents to be a significant contribution to household income. A further consequence of household poverty is over-age enrolment. As Akyeampong (2009) states, some Ghanaian children are enrolled in a grade, on average, three years lower than the one which is nominally appropriate for their chronological age. Thus, over-age enrolment poses problems for both the children and the teachers (Lewin, 2015). Often, the over-age children, especially, when they constitute the minority, are likely to face social isolation from the rest of the pupils and possibly drop out of school. Teachers also face difficulties in facilitating effective learning for a wide range of age-related ability levels whilst operating what is essentially a monograde curriculum. This may have been the reason why when household surveys in Ghana asked why children are not in school, the common reply from parents and pupils was that schooling was neither interesting nor useful (Akyeampong, 2009). This, in my opinion, implies a vote of no confidence in the education system. One consequence Bosu et al., (2011) in their action research with headteachers in Ghana and Tanzania have identified with over-age enrolment and children combining work with schooling is the increased risk of becoming victims of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS. These poverty-related issues are intricately linked to the professional responsibilities of headteachers and teachers because the children take them to school, and headteachers and teachers cannot avoid sharing in these challenges.

### **School leadership challenge**

Educational leadership literature is replete with evidence that headteachers are influential over the organisational climate of the school, which is why Sergiovanni (2001) concludes that the role played by headteachers correlates to school effectiveness. It is in recognition of the crucial role of headteachers in relation to student learning that Hallinger and Heck (2010) and Leithwood and Louis (2012) insist that headteachers have impact on student achievement. In the context of Ghana, Zame, Hope, and Respress (2008) and Oduro (2009) have repeatedly, backed by evidence from research, emphasised the pivotal role of school heads in attaining a quality education. Headteachers bear the responsibility of leading staff and pupils to achieving the vision of the school. This role was well acknowledged by the Ghana Education Service – GES in its 1994 *Headteacher's Handbook* where it charged headteachers to ensure that schools are places of learning; children are in school; teachers are in school; teachers are teaching; and children are learning.

This complex role of headteachers puts them face to face with three interrelated issues: first, the provision of a homely school environment including safe physical spaces for learning – classrooms, furniture, toilets, and teaching and learning materials; second, attending to the daily problems that children bring to school – teenage pregnancy, illness such as HIV and AIDS, hunger, malnutrition, late arrival at school, drop-out; and finally, to motivationally supervise teachers, addressing issues such as late arrival for work and absenteeism. As McLaughlin, Swartz, Cobbett and Kiragu (2014) note in their case study on how schools and communities in Ghana, Swaziland, and Kenya support children to contextualise knowledge and create agency through sexuality education, schools can lead change by developing young people as significant actors in their own lives and that of the community in socio-culturally complex situations of poverty, health and sexual violence. In my view, headteachers play a key role in initiating and ensuring that schools lead the change McLaughlin et al. talk about. Research evidence from Hartwell, Wils, and Zhao (2006) has shown that malnourished and hungry children often lack the energy to concentrate and retain information. Similarly, as the World Bank (2004) and Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) state, teacher absenteeism and lack of commitment are growing problems in sub-Saharan Africa including Ghana. Headteachers contend with these hydra-headed issues, which may have underpinned Zame et al.'s (2008) view that headteachers have a major effect on virtually every aspect of school life as initiators, innovators, motivators, calculators, communicators, and problem-solvers.

To imagine performing the highly demanding job of headteachers with no leadership skills is obviously a contradiction in terms. But despite the important role of headteachers as emphasised by the above authors including Amakyi and Ampah-Mensah (2013) and Donkor (2013), the lack of headteacher professional leadership proficiencies is still a pressing issue that needs attention in Ghana. If this issue is not addressed, Ghanaians should expect, as Zame et al. (2008) noted, management and administrative behaviours rather than the practice of school leadership. As Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2010) clarify in their introduction to the second edition of *The principles of educational leadership and management*, leadership is about influencing the action of other people to achieve desirable ends, as compared to management which involves the use of leadership skills but functions primarily towards maintaining the status quo. When leadership is lacking in schools, there is the propensity for deference by default to traditional educational authoritarian administrative structures and teacher-centred teaching practices (Essuman & Akyeampong, 2011).

### **Teachers and teaching challenge**

In Ghana, like other parts of the world, teachers are at the cutting edge of whatever educational reforms are planned for implementation (Fobih, Asare-Bediako, & Boachie-Danquah, 1995). They are the government's agents of change who teach pupils to be innovatively loyal to the state (Boeh-Ocansey, 1997) but ironically, there is general public negativity about teachers and about teaching as an occupation in Ghana. Findings from Osei's (2006) work on 'Teachers in Ghana: issues of training, remuneration, and effectiveness' show predominantly negative opinions and aspirations among practising and trainee teachers, and even among many parents of trainee teachers who hoped that jobs other than teaching would become available for their sons and daughters. This is because teachers are overworked but receive abysmally low salaries, and in a consumerist society such as Ghana where people's worth is measured by their economic status, teachers' morale tends to dwindle.

As indicated earlier, the FCUBE and capitation grant policies led to an increase in child enrolments in schools and this trend implies having large class sizes of about 60 pupils or more (Osei, 2006). This widens the net pupil-trained teacher ratios, a reality, Akyeampong (2009) clarifies statistically when he says that student-trained teacher ratio increased from 43:1 in 1996 to 63:1 in 2005. The widened student-trained teacher ratios, as Dei (2004) observes, results in overworked teachers. Additionally, because of the challenge of funding education, teachers do not often get the necessary teaching and learning materials (TLMs) for their work. These realities, according to N'tchougan-Sonou (2000) demotivate teachers and encourage them to use teaching as a stepping-stone to more lucrative employment. I have observed that poor salaries have impelled teachers to divide their commitment between teaching and personal businesses such as organising private extra-tuition for students and managing provisions shops to augment their meagre salaries. Therefore, poor wages coupled with large class sizes and lack of teaching materials are some of the pressing issues teachers face. Closely linked to the challenges of leadership, teaching and learning is the attitude of mistrust and servility among education stakeholders, including headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents.

### **Attitude of interpersonal mistrust and spirit of servility in Ghana**

A common challenge I have observed in some African countries, including Ghana, is the attitude of mistrust and servility. My review of literature on these negative mentalities confirm their ubiquity in Ghanaian schools, and are considered *inter alia*, as the enduring legacies of the transatlantic slave trade (Nunn & Wantchekon, 2011; Tangonyire & Achal,

2012). At the basis of them, as M'baye (2006), Nunn (2008), and Rönnbäck (2015) state, are some of the political, social, economic, and educational challenges.

In an empirical research in which Nunn and Wantchekon (2011) used surveys with individuals of voting age each from 17 sub-Saharan African countries including Ghana, to gauge the origins of mistrust, they conclude that there is a low level of interpersonal trust in Africa. The authors add that the origins of the mistrust can be traced back to the legacy of the slave trade. These, and earlier authors argue that the slave trade altered the cultural norms of the ethnic groups which were affected and resulted in a long-term deterioration of their legal and political institutions. Such ethnic groups and the local communities, as Piot (1996) and Inikori (2000) say, became extremely insecure paving the way for individuals to be raided, kidnapped, tricked and sold by neighbours, local governments, friends and family members. Thus, people's mistrust in their neighbours, co-ethnics, and even relatives evolved and persists to this day as parents pass the mentality to their children from generation to generation. Consequently, people find it safer and better to mistrust than trust those around them (Nunn & Wantchekon, 2011).

Much as the above claims may not be exhaustive with regards to factors accounting for the interpersonal mistrust in Ghana, the veracity of the ubiquity of the canker of mistrust in educational institutions cannot be disputed. One way the mistrust is expressed is through servile attitude in professional spaces like education offices and schools, where people, especially subordinates, serve to please those in authority rather than creatively share in the common vision of the institution (Tangonyire & Achal, 2012). Put differently, the spirit of servility is an existential mindset that perpetuates the top-down, master-servant or master-slave philosophy of leadership. It is anchored on culturally in-built fear and mistrust of the other, and promotes the canker of 'lip service', the fear of risk-taking and suppresses creativity. Thus, the attitude of mistrust and servility permeates the activities of education stakeholders – headteachers, teachers, parents, and circuit supervisors and has contributed to the challenges which inhibit school improvement efforts. These ideas on how LfL opens the door to change are incorporated into Table 2.2 on page 17. It was within the context of these vexing challenges – negative mentalities, leadership, teaching and learning that the LfL Ghana programme was introduced and how LfL opens the door to change is articulated in the Table 2.2.

## **The LfL and the Ghanaian basic education**

The LfL programme was introduced to Ghanaian basic schools from 2009 onwards through collaboration between the Ghana Education Service, the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) at the University of Cape Coast, and the Centre for Commonwealth Education (CCE) at the University of Cambridge. As a distinctive framework that emphasises capacity-building (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009), the LfL initiative is structured across five principles and practices in which both leadership and learning are construed as shared activities by all participants within a school (MacBeath & Dempster, 2009). The LfL principles are a focus on learning, creating a conducive environment for learning, creating a learning dialogue, sharing of leadership and accountability. The broad objective of the LfL Ghana programme is to improve the quality of basic education by making a potentially sustainable contribution to building and strengthening the leadership capacity of basic school headteachers in Ghana, improving the quality of learning through school/classroom leadership, and influencing policymakers to make leadership development a condition for appointing basic school headteachers (Jull et al., 2014).

The idea of influencing policymakers to encourage and support headteachers' leadership development in Ghana resonates with a similar call by Amakye et al. (2013) for government to adequately prepare school heads and to appoint them based on their leadership competence about theory and practice rather than on mere length of teaching record. This, by no means implies that the role of teachers is not important because research evidence shows that teachers act as role models, inspire children to lifelong love for learning and encourage them to build their confidence and self-assurance (Grenville-Cleave & Boniwell, 2012). Even more radically, as Southworth (2011, p. 73) states in his article, 'Connecting leadership and learning', "a school cannot exceed the quality of its teachers." Thus, teachers are pivotal to the effective life of a school. However, it is the ability of headteachers to foster trusting and cooperative environments for friendship (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010), which inspires teachers to effective teaching and learning. Therefore, following discussions with policymakers, academics and practitioners at different levels within the Ghana education system, it was practical that the entry point for the LfL work in Ghana be the headteachers who would be agents for change in their schools (Jull et al., 2014). In the table below, I summarise how the LfL Ghana programme relates to the issues discussed above.

**Table 2.2 LfL in relation to issues of basic education in Ghana**

Government of Ghana's goal for basic education	Issues impeding the achievement of the goal	Associated problems of the issues	The role of LfL Ghana as it relates to these issues
<b>Quality basic education:</b>  <i>One that equips children with the ability to create, innovate, think critically and independently as they ascend the higher stages of education (The Education Act 778 of 2008)</i>	<b>Mistrust and servile attitude</b>	Lack of sharing leadership responsibilities ideas, talents and personal experiences. Maintenance of status quo and fear to take risks or be creative	LfL opens the door to changing these mentalities by encouraging the active, collegial inquiry and sharing of values, understandings and practices; sharing of leadership among education stakeholders, collaboration and valuing of everyone's experience and expertise; a learning dialogue among stakeholders; creation of safe and secure environments for everyone to take risks, cope with failure and respond positively to challenges
	<b>Government-level:</b> 1. challenge of funding education	Lack of/inadequate school infrastructure, teaching and learning aids	Unable to support with funding but encourages policymakers and implementers through workshops to prioritise quality education
	2. Hierarchical, top-down, condescending rigid supervisory approach that instils fear in the subordinate, e.g. headteachers and teachers	Impels subordinates to resort to games of putting on a good show merely to satisfy the superior. Lack of freedom, creativity, ownership and commitment	Through the workshops organised for policymakers, regional and district directors of education, circuit supervisors, and headteachers on dialogue and its role in promoting shared leadership and accountability, stakeholders of education are encouraged to value each other's ideas, experiences, and expertise.
	<b>Family-level:</b> Household income poverty	Child labour, inadequate and poor housing, lateness to school, dropouts, over-age enrolments, malnutrition, child prostitution, diseases	Unable to address these directly but indirectly influences parents and children to value education especially through encouragement of cordial school-family relationships that make parents, irrespective of their economic condition, feel they are appreciated as part of the school family
	<b>School-level:</b> a) Headteacher leadership issues;  b) Teachers and teaching issues  c) Children's learning issues	Headteachers are unable to harness human capital to influence effective teaching and learning  Low morale, absenteeism, presenteeism <sup>3</sup> , attrition  Unable to learn well because of the cumulative effects of the government, family, and school-level problems	Develops headteachers' capacity so they can lead their schools effectively with the limited resources; create mutual motivation; nurture a culture of dialogue that enables them to focus on learning, create conducive environments for learning, share leadership, and be accountable

<sup>3</sup> Presenteeism, in Ghanaian educational context denotes an attitude whereby staff are present in school to satisfy the requirement of being in school but do very little regarding their responsibilities.

Table 2.2 shows that LfL Ghana relates primarily but not exclusively, to school leadership, teaching and learning, which it helps to improve. But it also indirectly relates to household challenges by promoting cordial school-family relationships that enable parents and schools to address some of the problems like late arrival at school. The fruits of a proper understanding of the principles include their enthusiastic embrace by headteachers and the GES (the education policies implementer) which endorsed the LfL principles in its 2010 *Headteachers' Handbook* as leading-edge practice for headteachers countrywide (Jull et al., 2014). During my fieldwork, one of the headteachers showed me a copy of the GES-published 100-page *Leadership for Learning handbook/manual for headteachers and circuit supervisors*. Reports in the LfL Ghana programme's newsletter, *LfL Ghana Newsletter*, a platform for headteachers and circuit supervisors to share experiences of incorporating the LfL principles in schools, confirm the positive impact of the LfL principles in schools. For example, Aguri (2012), a headteacher of a primary school in northern Ghana shares in the Newsletter that dialogue has become a lifeblood of his school and, through it, he was able to mobilise the PTA of the school and the community to contribute foodstuffs to prepare lunch for the pupils. From their qualitative case study, Malakolunthu et al. (2014) found that the LfL principles have brought about headteacher transformation, improvement in pedagogical adaptation, staff collaboration, and improvement in student outcomes. To support and ensure a deeper understanding and successful implementation of the principles, the LfL team organised Leadership for Learning successful practice sharing conferences for headteachers and circuit supervisors (MacBeath, Swaffield, Oduro, & Bosu, 2010). Mobile phone texting was also instituted to provide a medium for headteachers to share experiences about the practice of the LfL principles.

## Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed quality education within the context of Ghana and the pressing issues which frustrate its achievement. Given the crucial importance of quality education, however, governments of Ghana and development partners continue to explore programmes to improve the quality of basic education. One of these was the LfL Ghana programme, which sought to develop the leadership capacity of the headteachers of basic schools to act as agents for change in their schools to improve the quality of leadership, teaching, and student learning. But as Lewin (2015) comments, the success of educational



interventions is linked to the understanding by the implementers and practitioners of the reform strategies. The next chapter critically reviews literature on leadership, learning, Leadership for Learning, and educational change implementation processes.

## **Chapter 3. Developing a critical awareness of Leadership for Learning and educational change implementation**

### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature on the concept of ‘Leadership for Learning’ with the aim of developing a critical understanding of the term, its significant definitions, interpretations and major debates and assumptions as it is used in different contexts. This understanding is then linked to literature about educational change implementation. Considering the complexity of LfL, it is important to be mindful that language is always more or less vague. Like a toolkit with different kinds of implements, the functions of words can be as diverse as these implements (Wittgenstein, 1953). Conceptual discussions are particularly crucial when the central terms used are not part of the common language (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 1999). Thus, clarifying the words leadership, learning, and ‘Leadership for Learning’ will help to clear any ambiguity in their usage.

Two reasons underpin my interest in the term LfL. First, it is identified as a key driver of school improvement through quality leadership, teaching and learning (Rodd, 2013). As a term that ‘marries’ leadership and learning, LfL does not only explore their interconnections but underscores “the relationship between school leadership, system-wide context and learning at all levels” (Malakolunthu et al., 2014, p.704). Stressing learning at all levels of the system is central to the idea of improvement and points to an earlier observation by Swaffield and MacBeath (2010) that a distinctive characteristic of LfL is capacity-building. Fullan (2006) defines capacity-building as an action which increases the collective efficacy of a group to improve student learning. Evidence from Malakolunthu et al.’s (2014) case study in LfL basic schools in Ghana refers to headteacher transformation, teacher professional growth, pedagogical adaption and student learning. I argue that these transformations exemplify what capacity-building represents. Dynamic and multifaceted capacity-building may be demanding (Stoll, 2009), but as Hopkins, Harris, and Jackson (1997) observe, it allows everyone in a system to be confident, participate, learn and contribute.

The second reason underpinning my interest is that LfL allows for learning and collaboration beyond the school walls between schools and parents and communities. In his article produced in volume four of *The international encyclopedia of education*, MacBeath (2010) talks about Leadership for Learning without limits, extending its scope to include learning beyond the context of school buildings – within families and communities. It will be

interesting to explore the processes through which the LfL programme enables this collaboration and learning. I believe that developing a critical understanding of the programme and the processes of its implementation can provide me with the essential principles for rethinking leadership and learning and applying them appropriately. The way people construe LfL depends on their beliefs and understandings about leadership and learning (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009). Therefore, this review considers first, leadership and learning as individual concepts and second, as conjoined LfL.

## **Dissecting leadership**

### **Definitions**

The word leadership figures extensively throughout the published literature in a broad range of disciplines including psychology, sociology, military studies, and education (Bryman, Collinson, Grint, Jackson, & Uhl-Bien, 2011) but is rarely defined. Nonetheless, there are some attempts at general definitions of leadership. An example is Leithwood and Riehl's (2005) definition of leadership as an influence process that causes other people to think or act in ways that they would not have done otherwise. The underpinning theoretical assumption is that leadership is a dynamic interactive activity rather than a static position located in an individual. That is why it is an influence process but it is not entirely clear whether the word 'influence' denotes persuasion, inspiration, or coercion. The American social theorist, Fay (1987) had clarified the idea of influence in relation to leadership to mean either a positional authority – the right of the person to require things of others or consensus on the reasonableness of what is proposed. This means that followers agree to do what was asked because they judge “that the leaders occupy a position which gives them the right to command a course of action or that they seek an action that is correct or justifiable” (Fay, 1987, p. 121). The word 'influence' was also clarified by Hallinger and Heck (2010) who researched the impact of shared leadership on school improvement and student learning in a longitudinal study in elementary schools in the US. In this context, they qualified the influence process as mutual.

Within the context of education, especially in schools, leadership is about the core business of teaching and learning (Elmore, 2000) and embraces all those acts that improve these activities through direct or indirect intervention into teachers' work (Firestone & Robinson, 2010). This definition emphasises quality teaching and learning but its wording is ambiguous. For example, what does improve teaching and learning mean? Who improves

whom; who leads; who teaches; who learns; and how are these various activities done? Perhaps, an exploration of the existing debates on leadership theories might clarify these concerns.

### **Theoretical debates**

Drawing from the context of qualitative research, Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 15) define a theory as “a set of well-developed concepts related through statements of relationship, which together constitute an integrated work that can be used to explain or predict phenomena”. Borrowing from this definition, I consider theories of leadership as statements of relationship that explain the phenomenon of leadership. As a complex phenomenon, leadership theories are also complex and contested. In his article ‘Leadership and power’ in the *Sage handbook of leadership*, Gordon (2011) classifies theories of leadership broadly into two categories: the traditional leadership theories – trait, style, contingency, and non-traditional theory – dispersed leadership. The traditional theories adhere to the most hierarchical structures and control models of organisations.

#### *The traditional theories of leadership*

I would like to discuss the traditional theories of leadership through the lens of the trait theory since its philosophical assumption is applicable to the other traditional leadership theories. The trait theorists – Bowden (1926) and Bingham (1927) explain leadership in terms of personality traits, which differentiate leaders from the led. Bowden considered personality, in its stricter sense, to denote the tendencies of individuals to adjust to their social environment. In this sense, personality traits include intelligence, assertiveness, introversion, and extroversion, which were considered to relate positively to subordinate performance in all situations (Stogdill, 1974). The trait theory assumes that not everyone can exercise leadership; only those with the above qualities can be leaders. This is reductionist considering the complex nature of leadership.

Inherently, the traditional theories assume that the relationship between leaders and followers is hierarchically dualistic in nature. Leaders hold a position of privilege because they are superior to their followers either through natural ability or because they possess appropriate attributes (Gordon, 2002). This assumption seems to underpin the heroic leadership style, which according to Harris (2009), focuses on the work of an extraordinary individual, the ‘great man’. I think the idea of influence runs through all these theories, and the question I asked earlier remains relevant. Who influences whom, why, and how? It is

clear from the traditional theories that the leaders who are so by their rare traits, personality and style, influence their followers unidirectionally by persuasion, inspiration, or coercion. In any of these forms of influence, there is a dualism between the leader and the led. The traditional theorists usually seem to see no problem with the superior leader and subservient follower dualism (Hardy & Clegg, 1996). But there is a problem because as Enz (1988) has observed, these theories give leaders a 'voice' but silence the followers.

In the Ghanaian context, the interpretation of 'leadership as influence' is a tension-laden issue (Gyekye, 1997; Oduro & Macbeath, 2003) between adherents to the traditional hierarchical perspective to leadership and its critics. The tension revolves around the relevance of the hierarchical, person-centred forms of influence vis-à-vis the Ghanaian existential realities. Put differently, do the traditional modes of thought and leadership behaviour constitute resources or impediments to the development (Ciaffa, 2008) of Ghana? Ghana is only one of many contemporary knowledge societies that are marked by rights, shifting power relations, technological and social networks, and consequently, the traditional leadership theories are arguably becoming more inappropriate and unsustainable. This is because they can no longer adequately explain complex realities of leadership in contemporary society (Plowman & Duchon, 2008). These limitations have inspired the 'birth' of the contemporary non-traditional theories of leadership.

### *Contemporary theories of leadership*

The contemporary theories include distributed leadership and democratic leadership. Bryman (1996) refers to these broadly as dispersed leadership theories. They represent a major shift in leadership thinking because, unlike the dualistic hierarchical nature of the power relationship emphasised by the traditional theories, the contemporary theories espouse a sharing of power between leaders and followers (Gordon, 2011). Thus, we can say that the non-traditional theories portray leadership as an activity in which leadership responsibilities are distributed between both formal and informal leaders.

Narrowing the discussion to the school context, I would like to discuss distributed leadership, which embeds the common central idea of dispersing leadership as enshrined in the non-traditional leadership theories. Distributed leadership has been accorded the status of the most influential and preferred leadership model (Harris, 2010) and has won scholarly and practitioner attention (Gronn, 2010). The characteristic mark of distributed leadership is that it recognises a division of labour, co-performance and parallel performance in schools (Gronn, 2003). It depicts leadership as a set of activities in which the initiators and recipients

of influence are constantly changing depending on the task at hand, the available expertise, and the willingness and skill of those involved (Robinson, 2001). In schools, this dynamic encourages the active involvement of everyone in the leading and learning processes. From an empirical study of distributed leadership in elementary schools in the US, Camburn, Rowan, and Taylor (2003) have found that distributing leadership can occur either by design or by default. Distribution by design occurs when formally designated leaders create a new position and hire an individual to fill it. Leadership distribution can also evolve by default as individuals understand one another's skills and weaknesses over time and arrange compensatory measures. When a school encounters an unanticipated crisis, leadership can be distributed as formal leaders and teachers work together to address it (Gronn, 2003). Identifying design, default, and crisis as drivers of leadership distribution is insightful. However, can merely opening an additional formal position give an adequate sense of the distribution of leadership? Likewise, if leadership only gets distributed once an unanticipated crisis strikes, what happens when no crisis arises? The emphasis on sharing leadership is considered a strength of the dispersed theories but it is also their weakness.

In practical terms, how is leadership shared in contexts of uneven gender or power relations such as the Ghanaian school? This is a challenge that is acknowledged by Harris (2004) who states that distributed leadership presents an inherent threat to status and the status quo in contexts of an uneven authority structure. However, Spillane (2006) thinks collaboration and coordination can allow the distribution of responsibility. But, the challenge persists because daily contextual policy and socio-cultural realities influence leadership distribution, and these realities keep changing. In Ghana, it might be more appropriate to talk of delegation rather than the distribution of leadership. As Hartley (1999) remarks, distributed leadership emerged as a response to the overwhelming responsibilities on the positional head, and was considered by Fitzgerald and Gunter (2008) as managerialism in a new guise. It also blurs the normally clear boundary that differentiates the identity and power of the leader from the led (Law, Galton, & Wan, 2010). Although these reservations are a bit overstretched, they suggest that an appropriate climate is an essential pre-condition to meaningfully distribute leadership (Bush, 2011). The question then is what constitutes an appropriate climate and how such a climate can be created. These are vexing questions but the creation of collegial norms (Harris, 2005), trust<sup>4</sup> (O'Neill, 2002), dialogue (Swaffield, 2008), and allowing for

---

<sup>4</sup> Without trust we cannot stand. We need it because we have to be able to rely on others acting as they say that they will, and because we need others to accept that we will act as we say we will (O'Neill, 2002, pp. 3-4)

human agency (Frost, 2006) in Ghanaian schools can enable a climate conducive to the distribution of leadership to flourish. These ideological differences surrounding the meaning and practice of leadership will persist and the existential needs of each context will determine which leadership theory is more helpful. For this study, leadership represents a diffused, mutual influence activity, which is geared toward achieving the wider good of holistic student learning. So it is necessary to discuss and define learning since I wish to marry leadership and learning into a single concept.

## **Dissecting learning**

### **Definitions**

Like leadership, learning is key to education. Scholars' opinions converge regarding learning as not only the central purpose of education but as its most basic concept (Barrow & Milburn, 1990; Desforjes, 2000). As a basic concept, learning is not only the *telos* – end of education but its life force because to talk of education without learning would be a contradiction in terms. But, learning, as the Danish lifelong learning expert, Illeris (2007) states, is a very complex matter and has no generally accepted definition. The broadest and most open definition is proposed by Illeris describing learning as any process in living organisms that leads to permanent capacity change. The key phrase of the definition, 'permanent capacity change' is vague because concepts such as capacity and change are intricate. Bringing this discourse to the context of schools, the conventional conception of learning often equates learning with students' compliance and excellent reproduction in standardised examinations of what teachers transmit to them (Qian & Walker, 2011). This strikes me as narrow and is based on the wrong assumption that students are *tabula rasa* – literally, blank slates. Contemporary perspectives challenge this conventional view conceiving learning as an activity that entails testing of ideas, thinking about thinking and developing a learning identity (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009). In this perspective, learning occurs when ideas collide, diverge and merge (Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2011). Theoretically, the contemporary perspectives assume that students have something to offer to the learning activity, which emerges from the interaction of ideas, resources, beliefs, worldviews, and visions (Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2011). Implicit in the new perspectives is the recognition of the centrality of understanding in the learning equation, something that fits well with the definition of learning from other scholars such as Liebling and Prior (2005), and Griffith and Kowalski (2010). For example, Liebling and Prior say that learning is acquiring of

information, knowledge and skills and processing them into understanding. Stressing the idea of understanding is appropriate since we are rational beings. But learning is equally a social activity, which the definitions above seem to neglect. As a social activity, learning should permeate and enhance all aspects of our lives from the narrow issue of acquiring a corpus of schooled knowledge and skills to the broader matter of learning to be a person in society and through every aspect of social life (Delors et al., 1996; Desforges, 2000). Perhaps, the different theories of learning might shed more light on the issue.

### **Theories of learning**

The literature on learning shows that psychological theories have dominated the terrain of learning. Desforges (2000) outlines associationism, constructivism, problem-solving, and connectionism as examples of psychological theories of learning and explains them as follows. Associationism is described as a curriculum-centred approach to learning, which considers knowledge as consisting of associations between small elements of experience. This theory suggests that the curriculum in any subject area must be unpacked until the basic elements are identified. The constructivists suggest that humans have the capacity to construct general theories about their experience. In this view, learners reflect on their experience and theorise it to develop their mental structures for understanding. The theory of learning as problem-solving views learning as the capacity for reflective enquiry which is applied strategically to solve problems. Connectionism states that knowledge is a vast network of interconnected elements and learning resides in the connection (Bereiter, 1991). These theories emphasise learning as a rational internal activity. Thus, rationalisation is an important part of who we are and how we learn as humans. A good consequence of emphasising the rational aspect of learning is the promotion of ‘deep’ study. Howie and Bagnall (2015) say that this term was originally coined by Marton and Saljo in 1976 to differentiate students who seek an active engagement with the curriculum in a search for meaning from those who memorise and reproduce the curriculum, the ‘surface’, learners.

Nevertheless, as I hinted earlier, learning also has social dimensions. In fact, since the 1980s, findings from cognitive anthropology and socio-psychological studies have suggested that learning is a social process, taking place as an interaction between people. Consequently, contemporary theories of learning incorporate an external social process of interaction and an internal process of elaboration and acquisition (Illeris, 2007). I am drawn to an understanding of learning as both a cognitive and a social process that enables learners, to use Claxton's (



2002) four ‘Rs’, to be resilient, resourceful, reflective, and reciprocal. A cursory look at research literature in educational leadership shows that leadership and learning are interrelated. Southworth (2011) is one of the scholars who stress the relationship between leadership and learning. But the interrelationship can take different phrasal nomenclatures such as leadership *for, and, of, as, by, with, from* learning (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009), and as Harlen (2006) cautions, each of these connectors renders a different meaning to the phrase that is formed. Leadership *for* Learning is my focus.

### **Leadership for Learning: the challenge of conceptualisation**

As a product of a ‘marriage’ between two already contested and complex words, ‘leadership’ and ‘learning’, LfL is an intricate terrain to navigate with regards to its interpretations. “Bringing leadership and learning together entails more than an act of addition or utilising one in the service of the other” (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009, p. 38). Scanning through book chapters and journal articles, I realise how convoluted it is to interpret LfL. In *The Jossey-Bass reader on educational leadership*, which is edited by Grogan (2013), part four of the book is captioned, ‘Leadership for Learning’. The five chapters forming this part interpret LfL from varied angles perceiving it as: capabilities for student-centred leadership; a leader’s role in developing teacher expertise; and managing school leadership teams. Similarly, Townsend and MacBeath (2011) have edited a 1, 237-page *International handbook of Leadership for Learning*, in which 66 chapters give different interpretations to LfL from different contexts.

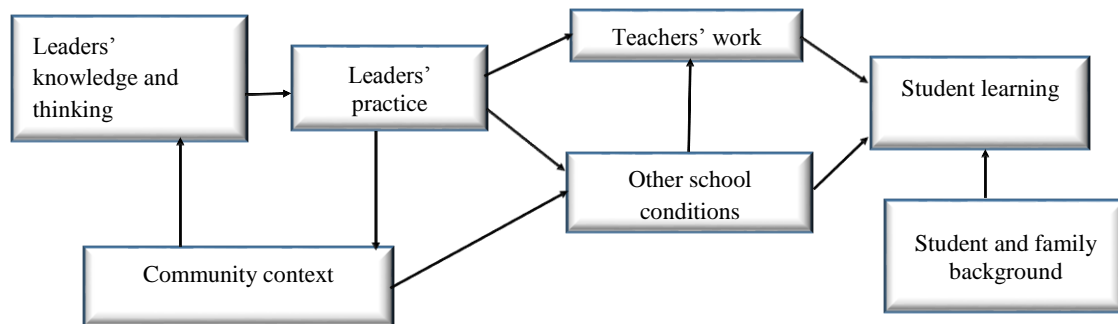
This notwithstanding, there have been some attempts at conceptualising Leadership for Learning. One example is the Carpe Vitam’s conception of LfL as:

an educational practice that involves an explicit dialogue, maintaining a focus on learning, attending to the conditions that favour learning, and leadership that is both shared and accountable. Learning and leadership are conceived as ‘activities’ linked by the centrality of human agency within a framework of moral purpose (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009, p. 42).

This definition assumes that LfL can transcend armchair speculations to the real world of practice where purposeful conversation among human beings can lead to desired goals.

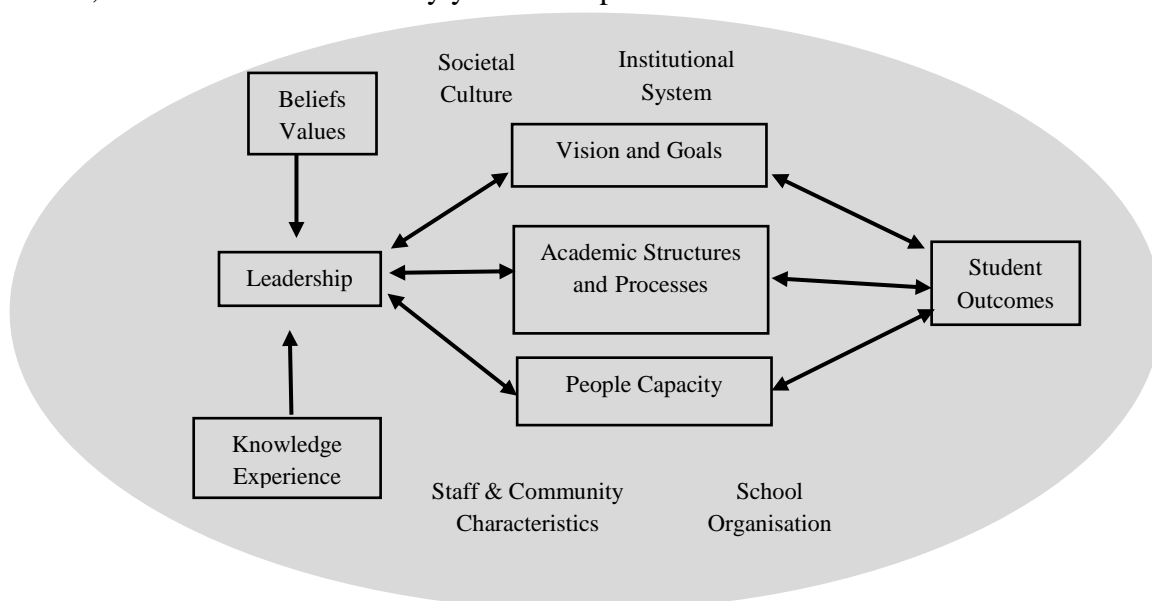
## Interpreting Leadership for Learning

The interpretations which scholars give to LfL depend on the degree to which scholars subscribe to the tenets of the traditional trait or contemporary dispersed leadership theories. Those who subscribe to the ideals of the trait theory equate LfL with instructional leadership where the personality of leaders is stressed. The assumption is that knowledge resides in the leaders and thus, casts them as hands-on-experts in learning and pedagogy (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009). Figure 3.1 below gives a sense of this narrow interpretation of LfL.



**Figure 3.1 How leadership relates to student learning based on (Hallinger & Heck, 1996)**

The direction of the arrows in this figure shows that leaders' knowledge and thinking determine what they practise, which in turn determines the teachers' work and other conditions of the school, and ultimately, student learning. This model is reductionist and anthropologically unacceptable because it literally portrays teachers and students as mere recipients of wisdom rather than significant others who are capable of reasoning, creativity, and initiatives. Perhaps, the awareness of the narrowness of this interpretation impels Hallinger (2011) to develop the following more synthesised framework for the interpretation of LfL, based on a review of forty years of empirical research on LfL.



**Figure 3.2 A synthesised model of Leadership for Learning (Hallinger, 2011, p. 127)** 28

A notable feature of the synthesised model is the double-edged arrows, which show that LfL involves a reciprocal process. Subsumed in this figure, however, are three assumptions: first, leadership is enacted within an organisation; second, it is moderated through personal characteristics of leaders – their values, beliefs and expectations; and third, leadership impacts student learning through school-level processes (Hallinger, 2011).

The first and third assumptions are crucial starting points upon which other scholars build broad conceptions of LfL. Existentially, it is uncontested that school leaders are influential, and their values, beliefs and expectations have a bearing on student learning. However, there can be a danger of giving personal interests of leaders the ‘driver’s seat’ which can explicitly or implicitly run counter to the wider good. I am expressing this concern bearing in mind Burns (1978) competing theories of human nature where if leaders fall into the theory X category, laziness, self-centredness and lack of ambition determine their actions. This synthesised framework, like the previous model (figure 3.1) places leadership in the province of the positional leaders and their impact on student learning, and on this basis, equates LfL with instructional leadership.

#### *The LfL as instructional leadership (IL)*

In a public lecture at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, on the topic ‘Leadership for 21st-century schools: from instructional leadership to Leadership for Learning’, Hallinger (2009) remarks that LfL is a ‘reincarnation’ of instructional leadership. Although these two models of leadership share similarities, their philosophy and operative principles are fundamentally different. Like IL, LfL focuses primarily, not exclusively though, on student learning and improvement (Jull et al., 2012). LfL also respects the hierarchical structure and the micropolitics of the school (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009). Moreover, the concepts of leading, teaching and learning are central to both LfL and IL. Thus, both leadership models share some similarities. But, they are distinct, and this is well captured in the following analysis by MacBeath and Townsend (2011, p. 1250):

Whereas the instructional leadership reduces learning to ‘outcome’, Leadership for Learning embraces a much wider, developmental view of learning. It sees things through a wide-angle lens, embracing professional, organisational and leadership learning. It understands the vitality of their interconnections and the climate they create for exploration, inquiry and creativity.

Drawing from this quote, I think that LfL looks at where a school is now, where it wants to be and then enables decisions, as Mitchell and Sackney (2011) say, to unfold from within the fabric of school life and respond authentically to the daily work of teachers and students. LfL achieves this by promoting stakeholder trust, dialogue and collective responsibility in leading and learning (Townsend, 2012). In contrast, IL atomises a very complex set of interactions into specific indicators and activities and then tells teachers how to apply them, within a given environment, leaving no room for mutual trust and creativity (Townsend, 2012). As Bush (2011) remarks, it focuses primarily on the direction rather than the processes of leadership. Another leadership model often compared with LfL is transformational leadership (TL) because of the latter's emphasis on capacity-building (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).

### *The LfL as transformational leadership*

Transformational leadership emerged in the 1990s based on the assumption that schools were no longer merely implementers of change but its initiators (Bush, 2011). As a result, headteachers seek support from teachers and other stakeholders to initiate and implement change. Shields (2010) identifies the following characteristics of TL which are captured in table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 Characteristics of transformational leadership (Shields, 2010, p. 26)**

Identifier	Transformational leadership
Foundation	Meet the needs of complex and diverse systems
Emphasis	Organisation
Processes	Understanding of organisational culture; setting directions, developing people, and managing the instructional programme
Key values	Liberty, justice, equality, and effectiveness
Goal	Organisational change; effectiveness
Power	Inspirational
Leader	Looks for motive, develops common purpose and focuses on organisational goals

Some of the characteristics of TL in table 3.1 are like those of LfL. Change, capacity-building, liberty, and common purpose are some of the examples. However, these are not understood the same way. Whereas TL prioritises organisational change relating to its goals (Miller & Miller, 2001), LfL equally emphasises both the individual and the organisational needs (MacBeath & Dempster, 2009). In LfL, people's capacity-building is linked to their freedom to reflect and critique the leading, teaching, and learning processes. Moreover,

unlike TL where the emphasis is on the leader who directs others to the achievement of a vision (Shields, 2010), LfL focuses on leadership, the active mutual influence.

A cursory look at the consideration of LfL in relation to instructional and transformational leadership models makes clear that LfL is not synonymous with either of them. But their conceptualisations can be enriched by learning from the characteristics of each. IL can learn from LfL by moving from narrow focus on specific outcomes to a broad understanding of learning in all its forms, and from directing people what to do, to allowing what Swaffield (2007) calls ‘critical friendship’ – respectful and mutual listening, questioning, critiquing and feedback. The version of LfL that incorporates these lessons is the Carpe Vitam’s (CV) interpretation of Leadership for Learning.

### **The Carpe Vitam’s interpretation of LfL and application**

The CV was an international three-year project within which leadership and learning, and their interconnections were tested in schools in Europe, North America and Oceania (Waterhouse & Dempster, 2009). The project makes sensitivity to the micro-context of relationships, organisational structures, and micropolitics, and to the macro-context of government policy and priorities an important element of conceptualising and interpreting LfL (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009). From this perspective, LfL is a whole school/community activity that aims at improving learning. The idea of whole school learning connects well with Argyris and Schön’s (1996) concept of ‘learning organisation’ in which they talk about both individual and organisational change. LfL portrays leadership as relational (Day, 2011) and as a mutual influence process and the distinguishing mark of the CV’s conceptualisation of LfL is its five principles for practice.

#### *The five principles of LfL*

The five principles for practice, as Frost and Swaffield (2008), two of the key researchers of the CV project insist, are not a rigid checklist against which to compare success or failure of practice; rather, they “are statements in which values are embedded, and are sufficiently concrete to enable people to clarify and refine their visions of ideal practice” (p.107). The principles are a focus on learning, creating conditions conducive to learning, creating a learning dialogue, and sharing leadership and accountability. As value statements, these principles are flexibly applicable in a variety of purposes including reflection, self-evaluation, and planning of change (MacBeath, Frost, Swaffield, & Waterhouse, 2006). These scholars

further explain that maintaining a focus on learning is where everyone – students, teachers, headteachers, schools, and the system itself learns. Creating conditions favourable for learning entails providing an environment in which:

cultures nurture the learning of everyone; everyone has opportunities to reflect on the nature, skills, and processes of learning; physical and social spaces stimulate and celebrate learning; and enable everyone to take risks, cope with failure and respond positively to challenges (MacBeath et al., 2006, p. 28).

Creating dialogue is about collegial enquiry where staff and students raise questions about pedagogy and gather data to fuel collective reflection. Sharing leadership involves encouraging participation in developing the school as a learning community where everyone takes the lead as appropriate to task and context. Finally, LfL practice involves a shared accountability in which a systematic approach to self-evaluation including internal accountability is embedded at the classroom, school, and community levels. These principles ride on the basic assumption that schools are democratic institutions or, at least, should be, which is perhaps why critical friendship is their *modus operandi*.

In the CV's LfL, everyone leads to learn and learns to lead. In other words, leadership is a learner-centred activity much as learning is a leadership-driven activity. The diagram below summarises the CV's conceptual framework of Leadership for Learning.



**Figure 3.3 Carpe Vitam's conceptual framework of LfL based on Swaffield and MacBeath (2009)**

In figure 3.3 the base of the ‘cake’ shows that leadership and learning are agential activities involving a system-wide active participation and creative fidelity. The practice of the principles is driven by a clear moral purpose, and practitioners’ belief in democratic values and the ideals of critical friendship. I consider a few practical instances where Leadership for Learning has been tried. LfL has been applied in the Italian and Malaysian educational contexts but in its narrow sense. In Italy, for example, Barzanò and Brotto (2008) reflect on LfL in the context of *Corso Concorso Ordinario* (CCO), a national initiative to equip leadership for teacher trainees. They notice that LfL for these trainees implies making explicit their own differing conceptions of learning but they lack an awareness of interrelationship between leadership and learning. Education policymakers understand LfL in terms of improving pupil performance in standardised examinations (Barzanò & Brotto, 2008). In other contexts, such as Ghana, LfL is applied in its broad sense.

#### *The Carpe Vitam’s LfL in practice: the case of Ghana*

As stated in chapter 2, the Leadership for Learning which was introduced in Ghanaian basic schools in 2009 has since gained the attention of policymakers and practitioners (Jull et al., 2014). This may have been because of the systemic bottom-up and top-bottom inclusive and collaborative approach the programme initiators deployed, involving the Ministry of Education, the Ghana Education Service, directors of education, circuit supervisors, and headteachers (Jull et al., 2012). This appreciation of systemness – “the recognition that each of us must contribute to the betterment of the bigger system, and benefit from it” (Fullan, 2016, p. 53) is crucial for change implementation. Through mutual consultations the LfL Ghana team selected a cadre of professional development leaders (PDLs), Ghanaian men and women with good knowledge of research, professional development, leadership and pedagogy, and of the socio-cultural and political issues of Ghana and trained in the LfL framework. The PDLs contributed to contextualising the principles and worked with the Cambridge team to plan and lead professional development courses and workshops. The series of LfL workshops which were led by the PDLs, as Jull et al. (2014) state, enabled the stakeholders to critique the principles for proper understanding, adoption, and adaptation according to the Ghanaian context. Reflections on feedback from participants’ evaluation of the programme inspired the LfL initiators to establish an LfL secretariat in the University of Cape Coast whose coordinator collaborated with the professional development leaders and circuit supervisors to facilitate the LfL implementation. The LfL Newsletter and mobile texting programme, according to Swaffield, Jull, and Ampah-Mensah (2013) sustained

commitment, and deepened understanding and sharing of successes, challenges, and learning among the school leaders. Use of these strategies enabled the LfL team to track progress or change in the LfL schools.

As hinted in chapter 2, LfL is about capacity-building that will lead to a desired change – improvement in leadership capacities of headteachers, pedagogical adaptation of teachers, school-parent relationships and pupils’ learning outcomes. But, what does it entail to implement educational change?

### **Implementing educational change**

No one escapes change and the perfecting role of change cannot be overemphasised. As the nineteenth century English theologian, Newman (1846) said in *An essay on the development of Christian doctrine*:

In time it enters upon strange territory; points of controversy alter their bearing; dangers and hopes appear in new relations; and old principles reappear under new forms. It changes with them in order to remain the same.

In a Higher World it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change and to be perfect is to have changed often (p. 39).

This quote points to Newman’s belief that human ideas are not perfect and that there is the need for change that strives towards grasping the perfect ideas of the Christian doctrine. Thus, I think the concept of perfection nuances improvement as the telos of change. In her review of literature on whole school change in England, Thomson (2010) posed the question: ‘What is change?’ Her response to this question aligns with Deutsman (2007) and Fullan (2016) that change is a process that transforms peoples’ beliefs, attitudes, goals, and skills, which they often tacitly or explicitly resist. This implies that interventions aiming at change must speak to people’s beliefs (Gardner, 2004) and re-orient them towards their capacities, school culture and structures, and moral purpose. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) define moral purpose as the meaningful vision which invites commitment; capacity as knowledge and skills of school human resources; and structure and culture as material time-space-resource economy of the school and how it conducts its daily affairs. But, what does it entail to change or perfect the imperfect educational institutions or systems?

Creating change for the sake of doing so in education, as Levin and Fullan (2008) remark, is easy but if it is change that improves pupils’ outcomes, schools and educational systems, it is not easy to achieve. This is because educational institutions are complex and run by human



beings with competing interests at work, which have the potential to distract the pursuance of core strategies for system improvement. Thus, as one pursues the core strategy there must be an explicit awareness that the process of system change involves personal and collective ambivalence, uncertainty, loss, struggle, anxiety, hard work, and resilience over a period of years (Marris, 1975).

However, as Fullan (2016) claims, if change works out, it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment, and professional growth, and thus, Levin and Fullan (2008) propose some strategies which can inspire a successful implementation of change. They include: setting of a small number (2-4) of achievable goals; starting implementation of educational intervention on a positive note; engaging multi-stakeholder collaboration; building their capacities; motivating them; embracing effective transparent communication and use of resources; and paying attention to pedagogy. Reflecting on these recommendations, I realise that educational improvement programmes such as Leadership for Learning (Jull et al., 2012) and the Whole School Development – WSD (Akyeampong, 2004) embraced multi-stakeholder collaboration, capacity-building and effective communication as strategies to effect change in Ghana. Hopkins (2002) notes similarly that the Aga Khan school improvement initiative which aimed to effect change in schools in different parts of East Africa in the 1980s used capacity-building and community involvement as some of its strategies. The strategy of community involvement resonates with WSD's emphasis of decentralisation – a strategy for enhancing active participation and involvement of all key partners in planning and decision making. In my view, active multi-stakeholder participation can nurture a culture of ownership, partnership, and commitment among schools and communities to improve pupils' learning outcomes.

But, multi-stakeholder collaboration, capacity-building and effective communication are not easily achieved because their implementation entails power dynamics, people's beliefs, experiences, and provision of material resources which are not often available. As Akyeampong (2004) elucidates, the WSD programme was designed and managed by the Ministry of Education to allow for multi-stakeholder participation but power asymmetry, ideological differences, and top-down rigid accountability (Sayed, Akyeampong, & Ampiah, 2000) negatively affected genuine multi-stakeholder participation in decision-making. In Ghana, a real multi-stakeholder engagement in government-driven educational change implementation is a challenge because governments, among other reasons, introduce these reforms to gain electoral support. This makes true multi-stakeholder collaboration difficult to

achieve despite Hattie's (2015) argument that it is imperative since it is the collaborative group that accelerates performance.

In *Changing urban education* in which Danielson and Hochschild (1998) contributed the chapter, 'Changing urban education: lessons, cautions, prospects', they underscore that at least in the context of the USA, changing practices across schools only happens when stakeholders, like headteachers and teachers, see the need and commit to making collaborative efforts to improve their daily practice. In the LfL Ghana programme, findings from Jull et al (2012) and Malakolunthu et al (2014) show that readiness and commitment of the headteachers to improve their schools through the LfL principles played a key role in the success of the programme. This evidence, in my view, resonates with Levin and Fullan's proposal that change interventions be predicated on positive views of their practitioners – headteachers and teachers who should be motivated. Such strategies, I argue, are important because they can build stakeholders' morale, self-efficacy and appeal to moral purpose especially when they are accompanied by multi-stakeholder capacity-building. Levin and Fullan (2008) capture the idea of multi-stakeholders through what they call 'permeable connectivity' and Barber (2007) refers to a similar understanding as a 'guiding coalition' around system change. The sense these two phrases convey is that when key leaders at various levels understand and articulate a change strategy that is being employed, it makes the strategy mutually reinforcing and enriching.

As Fullan (2016) adds, the philosophy of system thinking – a shift from 'my' to 'our' classroom, school, district, region and country matter a great deal for the success of interventions. Building the capacities of stakeholders – increasing their collective knowledge, competencies and effectiveness can enable system thinking and collaboration. When capacities of headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents are developed, they gain clarity, and acquire skills (Stannard & Huxford, 2007) which inspire success. This may have been at the basis of Elmore's (2004) claim that capacity-building is about providing opportunities for 'learning in context', which Spillane (2006) says can change the very context itself. However, building people's capacities requires money, time, and the willingness of those being empowered. The beneficiaries' availability and willingness are crucial because it is impossible to develop the capacity of someone who is not willing, and this is linked to the reality of communication and resource use.

Given the complex nature of educational institutions, effective communication and effective use of resources are important. It would be naïve for any change implementers to assume that their approach is self-evident to every person (Levin & Fullan, 2008). There is a

need for constant efforts to effectively communicate the meaning and rationale of any intervention to the stakeholders because as MacBeath, Pedder and Swaffield (2007) note in their empirical research on how schools learn how to learn, effective communication helps stakeholders to develop a sense of where they are going.

## **Summary**

This chapter was a review of the literature on Leadership for Learning to enable me to develop a critical understanding of its varied interpretations and contextual applications. After dissecting leadership and learning as atomic units, it was then possible to consider them in their conjoined form as ‘Leadership for Learning’. As a phrase that marries these two complex words, LfL is variously interpreted. The Carpe Vitam’s conception of LfL as a system-wide leading and learning activity is the sense that is emphasised because it was within that understanding of the LfL principles that this research is anchored. An exploration of literature on change implementation enabled me to appreciate the processes of incorporating the LfL programme which itself is about changing or improving educational systems. In the next chapter, I discuss the research design.

## **Chapter 4. Research design**

### **Introduction and research questions**

In chapter 2, I stressed the ubiquitous drive for equitable quality education in Ghana. I also discussed how the challenges of household poverty, leadership and teaching challenges hinder quality education delivery, and thus, served as the rationale for the introduction of the LfL programme in public basic schools to help improve school leadership, teaching and learning. Evidence-based researches showed the programme was well received and made positive impacts, but they were silent on the processes which inspired the impacts. Against this background, the primary objective of my research was to seek empirically-informed insights into the processes which account for the successful incorporation of the LfL programme.

This chapter discusses the research design. Research questions, it is argued, form the conceptual structure for designing and interpreting any research (Stake, 2006) because they “are the engine which drives the train of enquiry” (Bassey, 2009, p. 67). Thus, their nature is crucial for determining the research strategy, the data to be collected and the method for analysis to achieve the research objective. I aim to achieve my research objective by addressing the following research questions:

1. What do headteachers, teachers, and pupils in LfL schools in Ghana understand by the LfL principles?
2. How have headteachers, teachers, and pupils put the LfL principles into practice?
3. How have personal, socio-cultural, political, and economic factors promoted the incorporation of the principles?
4. How have these factors inhibited the incorporation of the principles?

These questions are largely ‘how’ questions because they enable me to probe beneath the surfaces of the processes of incorporating the principles. They are drawn from the literature chapters – 2 and 3. I deduce from these chapters that contextual conceptualisation of key concepts that educational change interventions embed and the prevailing opportunities and threats which influence practitioners’ ability to embrace interventions determine the way they enculturate such interventions. In chapter 3, for instance, I showed how the LfL was conceptualised and, based on that, it was either applied in its narrow or broad sense. Guided by insights from the literature, it was important that I formulate research questions which

enable participants to share not only their understanding of the LfL principles, but also the opportunities and threats to the effective practice of the principles.

A key consideration for a coherent and trustworthy outcome requires that the research project is situated within a particular epistemological belief, which must be compatible with the research questions, strategy, and methods of data collection and analysis (Flick, 2015).

### **Epistemological assumptions**

Epistemological assumptions, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018), concern the nature and forms of knowledge and how it can be acquired and communicated to other human beings. Human beings can view knowledge as an objective or a subjective reality according to the nature of the subject and the way truth is warranted (Flick, 2015). As can be gathered from my research questions, the aim is to gain insights into the personal, socio-cultural, political, and economic dynamics within which stakeholders have incorporated the LfL principles. Gaining insights into these processes demands my interaction with the participants, and analysis and synthesis of their experiences and practices of the principles. This interaction is needed since knowledge is not passively found but is inter-relationally and inter-subjectively created through social interactions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). This worldview does not fit with the epistemological position of positivism/objectivism, which argues that there is a reality ‘out there’ in the world that exists independent of its observers (Bassey, 2009). It means that the positivist stance recognises neither the researcher as a significant variable in the research process nor the subjective experiences of the participants. However, for this study, participants’ views could prove to be an important source of insight for understanding the processes of incorporating the LfL principles. As a study that involves human interactions, asking questions, observing, and sharing personal experiences about the social phenomenon under consideration, the interpretivist-constructionist stance (Crotty, 1998) which seeks to understand the meaning others have about the world by relying on participants’ views of the situation (Creswell, 2007) better fits my research. This is important because meaning is constructed “by, for and between members of a discursively mediated community” (Hruby, 2001, p. 51) through different interpretivist strategies.

### **Interpretivist research strategies**

Research strategies which are frequently associated with the interpretivist-constructionist epistemological stance include grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenology, and case

study (Creswell, 2014). Grounded theory aims to inductively generate a theory from data and its design usually avoids pre-conceptualisation (Glaser & Holton, 2004). My study already has predetermined parameters of investigations from investigating LfL literature, thus, grounded theory is not suitable for it. Ethnography, which studies the shared patterns of beliefs, behaviours, language and actions of a cultural group (Creswell, 2014) is also not suitable because this study is not restricted to a cultural group but involves schools where the participants come from different backgrounds. Additionally, in the ethnographical study, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) state, the focus of the inquiry emerges after the researcher participates in the daily life of the people for an extended period of time. The focus of my research is already determined by my research questions so I do not need to wait for that to emerge in the field. Another interpretivist approach is phenomenology, which emphasises the description of the essence of a phenomenon in the lived experiences of people (Creswell, 2014). If I were to adopt phenomenology for my study, it would mean that my focus would be more on the themes of the phenomenon (Denscombe, 2014) of the LfL. But the subjective meanings and experiences of the participants are crucial for this study. The strategy that is most appropriate for my purpose is case study especially in its qualitative form, not only because it can respond to my research questions which take the nature of ‘how’ (Yin, 2014) but because it enables me to investigate the particular, namely, the bounded system of a case (Stake, 2006) in its natural context. The interpretivist approaches explained above and some quantitative data collection can be done in natural contexts but what I refer to in this study is the particularity of each case vis-à-vis its relationship to others.

I do not narrowly reduce ‘context’ to its spatial sense, namely, a country such as Ghana or basic schools in Ghana. Rather, I think of context more as an articulation of a set of connections and disconnections that are considered to be relevant to a specific agent that is socially and historically situated, and to a particular purpose (Dilley, 1999). This means that context is a dynamic reality that researchers and participants co-create constantly based on their geographical, historical, socio-cultural, political and ethical sensitivities (Stake, 2006). It is within this understanding that I situate the qualitative case study.

### **Qualitative case study**

I qualify my research strategy as a ‘qualitative case study’ because the term ‘case study’ is generic and can transcend discipline boundaries in its usage. As Gerring (2004) indicates, a case study can be used in areas as disparate as education, anthropology, business studies,

archaeology, medicine and marketing, and it carries different meanings in these different fields (Robson, 2011). A case study is also not necessarily a qualitative research strategy because it can be quantitative or mixed (Creswell, 2014). It is possible to even have a case study that is limited to quantitative evidence (Yin, 2014). My research design is qualitative in character implying that it took place in the settings of the selected schools where I talked to people, asked questions, developed relationships, observed social interactions, and analysed relevant documents to corroborate the participants' experiences. Put differently, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observations and documentary analysis were used to capture data for this research, and these techniques will be discussed in chapter 5. The appropriate name for a case study that studies these experiences of real cases operating in real situations with the aim of collecting qualitative data is a qualitative case study (Stake, 2006). Since qualitative case study is a more tightly defined form of the broader case study strategy and draws its meaning and guidelines from it, I dissect the broad concept of case study to help me better formulate my qualitative case study.

### **Case study: definitions and principles**

A case study is variously defined, as an instance, a method, methodology, or strategy. Whereas Adelman, Kemmis, and Jenkins (1980) present case study as the study of an instance in action, Nisbet and Watt (1984) prefer to conceptualise it as a specific instance that is designed to illustrate a general principle. Maintaining the centrality of the word 'instance', Creswell (1994, p. 12) defines case study "as a single instance of a bounded system, such as a school". A common feature among these definitions is the association of case study with the study of an instance. Although none of them explicitly elaborates on what the word 'instance' means, it seems that Adelman et al. present 'instance' as an active phenomenon, which links specific and general realities. The idea of the instance being linked to the general is clearly articulated in Creswell's definition which portrays the single instance as being part of a bounded system. However, this definition is questionable because it delineates the boundary between the phenomenon and its context. As Yin (2009) argues, the boundary line between the single phenomenon and its contexts is blurred. This view also counteracts an earlier position by Stake (2006), which emphasises the importance of identifying the boundaries of cases. The contention seems to be based on each scholar's understanding of what constitutes a case. Whereas Stake (2006) emphasises what is ingrained in an individual case at a point in time, Yin (2009) stresses the phenomenon that is studied through a particular case, which

cannot be clearly delineated from its socio-cultural context. In my study, the case is located at the school, which represents a melange of human, physical, social, and emotional spaces. The idea of 'boundary' in such a situation is vague. Thus, Yin's point appears to be more tenable. However, the fluidity and complexity that surround 'boundaries' and 'contexts' make it perhaps even more prudent to consider case study as both a tightly bounded as well as a loosely bounded system (Verschuren, 2003).

The conceptualisation of a case study as a method was an idea expressed by Crotty (1998) but the challenge with presenting a case study as a method is that it reduces case study to a technique for collecting data. To allow for a broader understanding, Creswell (2007) defines a case study as a methodology in which the case<sup>5</sup> is the object and the product of enquiry. However, methodology specifies the whole philosophical thinking about a research project in which case study can only be a part rather than its equivalent. I think it is more appropriate to consider a case study as a research strategy as several scholars propose (e.g. Yin, 2009; Bassey, 2009; & Robson, 2011). Yin (2009) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry which investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence. Whereas according to Bassey (2009, p. 58), it is an empirical inquiry which is:

conducted within a localised boundary of space and time; into interesting aspects of an educational activity; mainly in its natural context and within an ethic of respect for persons; in order to inform the judgements and decisions of practitioners or policy-makers; in such a way that sufficient data are collected for the researcher to be able to: explore significant features of the case; create plausible interpretations of what is found; test for the trustworthiness of these interpretations; construct a worthwhile argument; relate the argument to any relevant research in the literature; convey convincingly to an audience this argument; provide an audit trail by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings.

For Robson (2011), a case study is a research strategy which involves the development of detailed, intensive knowledge about a single 'case' or related 'cases' with the focus on each case's own right, in its context.

---

<sup>5</sup>In case study, the case is the situation, individual, group, organisation or whatever it is that we are interested in (Robson, 2011).



These definitions provided by Yin, Bassey, and Robson, converge regarding conceptualising case study as a means of developing in-depth knowledge of a case in its real-life context. Thus, unlike other research strategies such as experiments, which take place in contrived environments, a case study involves an investigation in a real-life context of the case being investigated (Bassey, 2009). However, these authors diverge in terms of language, emphasis, and detail. While Yin stresses the ‘contemporariness’ of a phenomenon, Bassey, and Robson do not. Perhaps, Yin wants to show that historical cases are best researched using historical strategies of inquiry. Bassey and Robson tend to emphasise the importance of treating each case in its own right because of their belief in the clear delineation of boundaries between cases, to which Yin does not subscribe. Furthermore, whereas Yin’s definition stresses multiple sources of evidence as a key characteristic of a case study, the definitions of Bassey and Robson do not. In terms of specifics and details, Bassey’s definition differs from the others because it is specifically situated within the context of education embedding the ethical, analytic and interpretative dimensions of a case study. I argue that each of the definitions above offer a unique perspective through which we can learn something about case studies but they do not all have the same depth and richness. I think Bassey’s definition is comprehensive and rich and can greatly benefit this study.

A careful analysis of Bassey’s definition shows that it contains the principles that underpin case studies. It hints at concepts such as purpose, place, processes and product, which Macpherson, Brooker, and Ainsworth (2000) identify as principles of case studies. They explain that every case study research must have a purpose and specific real-world location, and the research processes must be authentic and sensitive to that location, and the findings should be communicable. Additionally, a case study should be significant, complete, considerate of alternative perspectives, engaging and careful to include enough evidence (Yin, 2014).

### **Types of case study**

There are several different types of case study and identified as: intrinsic, instrumental and collective (Stake, 1995); and descriptive, exploratory and explanatory (Yin, 2003). An intrinsic case study is suitable for situations where the researcher has an interest in the case because of its particularity and not to understand a generic phenomenon (Stake, 1995). Stake goes on to explain that an instrumental case study is undertaken when the context and activities of the case are scrutinised in depth to enable the researcher to gain deep insight into

an issue. The requirements of my study are a good example of this since I seek insights into the processes of incorporating the LfL principles. The collective case study style helps the researcher to gain a fuller picture into groups of individual cases (Stake, 1995) and according to Yin (2009), the descriptive type of case study describes a phenomenon within its context and the exploratory type provides a preliminary investigation of the situation. Finally, the explanatory type of case study explains presumed causal links of real-life events.

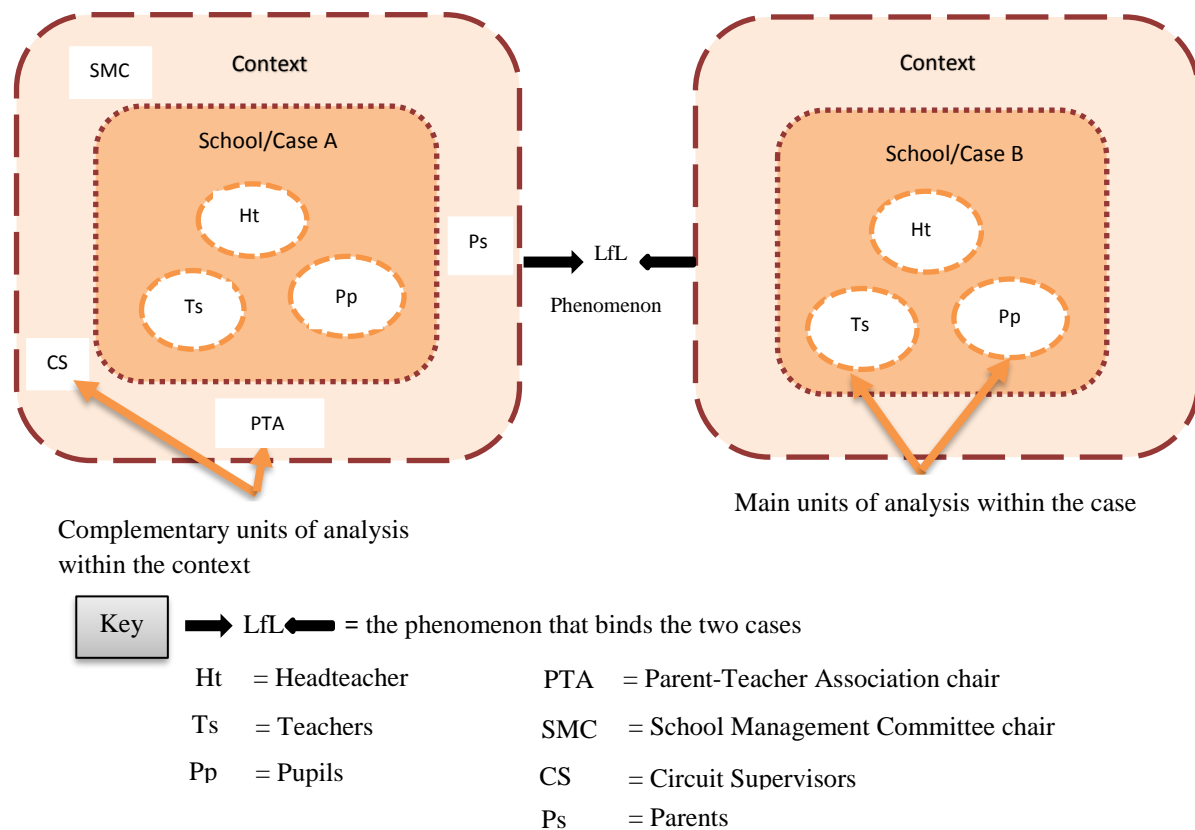
Stake's choice of words for categorising case studies seems to indicate his attention to the ontological uniqueness and functional dynamics of cases. The idea of an 'instrumental case study' suggests the centrality of functionality, the role a case can play towards a generic phenomenon. This idea of functionality is also nuanced in the words descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory. These words suggest the product that each of these types of case study seeks to achieve, by either describing, exploring, or explaining a phenomenon. In this context of function, Yin's categories of cases share similarity with Stake's instrumental and collective cases, even though the specific functions differ. For example, an instrumental case can include descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory functions, all of which are crucial for gaining an in-depth insight into the incorporation of the LfL principles.

I argue that the types of case study which Yin proposes fit into the broader concept of the instrumental case study because they all contribute to the idea of understanding a phenomenon and using this understanding to illuminate the larger context. Referring to this research, I think the instrumental type of case study better fits my purpose. This is a mixed case study that aims to analyse the processes of successful incorporation of the LfL principles from both cases (school A and B). Thus, wherever appropriate, in the narrative chapters – 7-10, views of participants which converge will be cross referenced in developing the narrative first to show that stakeholders from both schools share in a finding, and second, to buttress the point that the applicability of some of the processes or strategies to incorporate the LfL principles transcend the parochial context of each case. But I recognise that this may depend on whether my case study is of a single or multiple case design.

### **Single and multiple case designs**

A case study research project can be designed as a single or multiple case design, and within these variants, there can be a holistic unit of analysis, or embedded – multiple units of analysis (Yin, 2014). If the case study seeks to study a particular case, a holistic or embedded single case design is recommended (Yin, 2014). If a study contains more than a single case then a multiple case-study is required (Stake, 2006) and the design can be holistic or

embedded. I propose that a holistic multiple case study with embedded units is more beneficial to this study because such a blended design allows me to conduct my analysis within each school as well as across them. This better illuminates (Stake, 2006) the LfL principles and their incorporation into the two schools. Figure 4.1 below is a visual representation of an holistic multiple case with embedded units which I designed.

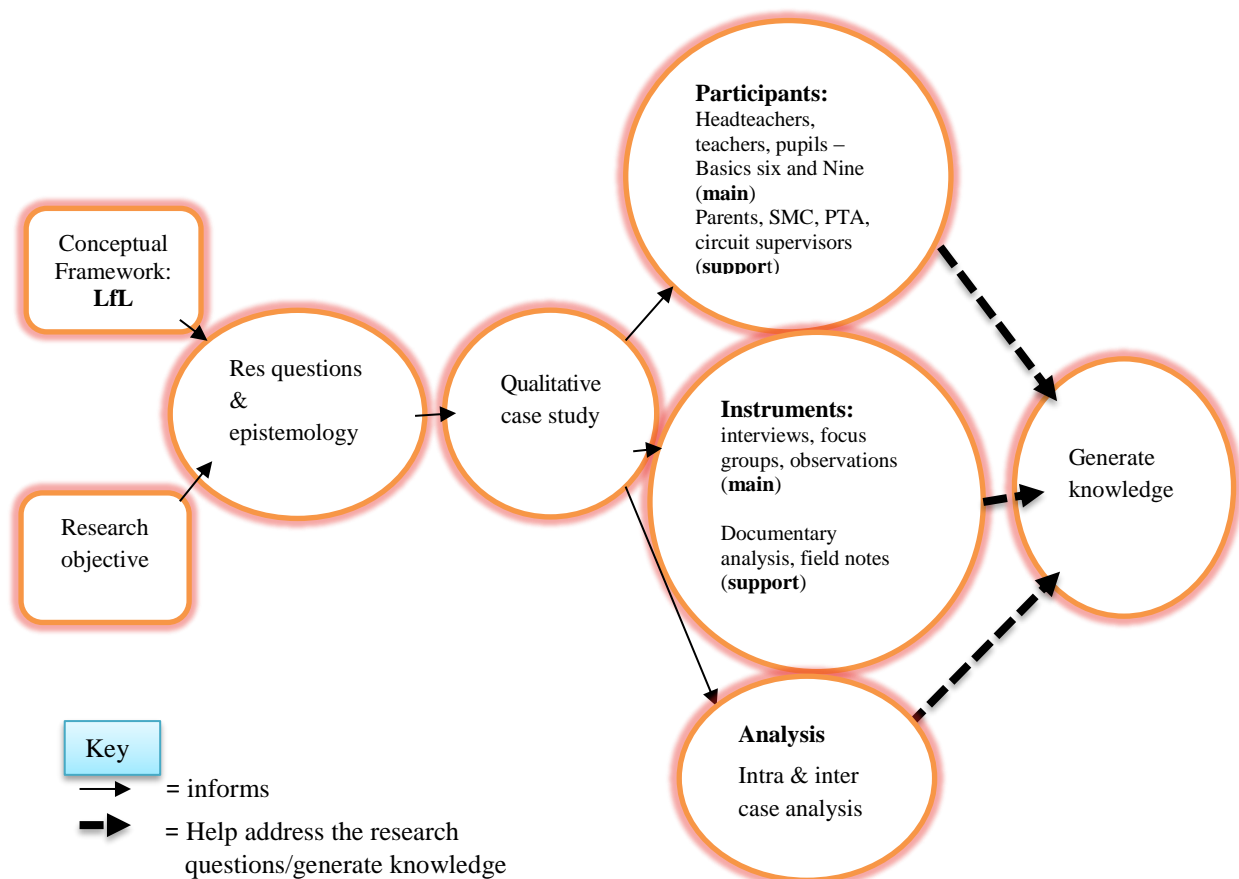


**Figure 4.1 A holistic multiple case study with embedded units based on Yin (2014)**

## Critiquing case studies research

A case study is often criticised for lack of rigour (Flyvbjerg, 2006) and for being selective, personal and subjective (Nisbet & Watt, 1984). Thus, the question: “How can you generalise from a single case study?” (Yin, 2014, p. 20) is frequently posed. These criticisms sometimes emanate from conceptual confluences and, therefore, create an opportunity for better explanations. As Garvin (2003) indicates, people often confuse case study strategy with case study teaching. He says that criticisms such as manipulation of data and lack of rigour best apply to case study teaching rather than case study research because the latter’s principles forbid such manipulations. I think that if researchers deviate from the principles of a case study it is an issue of lack of fidelity rather than a weakness of the strategy.

The criticism that findings from case studies are often not generalisable is linked to statistical generalisation, which as Robson (2002) explains, aims to move from a sample to a population based on sampling strategies, frequencies, statistical significance and effect size. However, there is an argument that “just as the generalisability of single experiments can be extended by replication and multiple experiments, so too, case studies can be part of a growing pool of data, with multiple case studies contributing to greater generalisability” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 294). Furthermore, generalisation requires extrapolation, and while it is not possible, in case studies, to extrapolate based on representativeness, it is possible to extrapolate to relevant theory (Macpherson et al., 2000). This implies that a case study is concerned not so much with a representative sample but the logical connection to, and ability to contribute to, the expansion and generalisation of theory (Yin, 2009). The figure below illustrates the research design.



**Figure 4.2 Summary of my research design**

### **Ethics: the significant rational other - consideration for, feeling and acting with**

Before implementing the research design, I considered the ethical dynamics. Ethical issues, procedural or situational, are unavoidable at each stage of research (Cohen et al.,

2018) and are considered seriously before, during, and after my fieldwork. The British Educational Research Association – BERA (2011) emphasises that research in educational settings must be conducted ethically with respect to the people involved and with knowledge and application of values that promote quality. Ethical decisions, as Taber (2013) insists, must take account of the potential beneficial and detrimental consequences they might have for the participants, research community, and wider community. Such considerations are needed to promote the beneficence and avoid the maleficence of ethical decisions on participants, their anonymity, and confidentiality (Piper & Simons, 2005).

I must stress that while assuring research participants of their confidentiality can make them feel safe to reveal vital personal information, it is also potentially problematic because some participants, for example, the pupils, may reveal cases of serious domestic abuse that risk harming their wellbeing. Although, no such situation needing to break confidentiality arose, it might therefore have been helpful to have agreed with the participants in advance that in such situations, confidentiality may be broken if it is judged that it can help to improve their situation. However, such an understanding may incur a degree of reluctance in some participants to be open and sharing. The awareness of these principles, recommendations and potential challenges governed my research processes as I negotiated access to the schools, collected data, and developed the thesis. The specific ways in which I adhered to both the procedural and situational ethics can be discerned in the ethically reflexive manner the research is conducted. I am aware that this piece of research should not jeopardise the possibility of future inquiries (Bassey, 2009) or the community of educational researchers (British Educational Research Association, 2018). As I reflect on the recent BERA (2018) ethical guidelines, I realise that my presenting myself simply, respectfully, truthfully and sensitively to the research participants and keeping my promises faithfully not only created mutual trust between me and the participants but was axiomatic of a good ambassador of the research community.

Although there are no documented ethical guidelines for conducting research in Ghana, I observed and was sensitive to the underlying value systems and embraced and complied with non-institutional ethical standards and guidelines applicable within each school context. Typical of real world studies, my research involved human beings with whom I interacted and developed relationships, and so it had some implications for the individual participants and society as a whole (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Therefore, I positioned myself among the participants as a researcher seeking ideas for academic, policy, and practitioner improvement purposes. This was evident in the way I maintained professional boundaries regarding what

kind of questions I asked, what kind of relationships I developed with the participants, and the degree of participation in daily conversations. I believe my ability to relate freely, easily and positively with people was crucial, and honesty and respect for the participants' dignity, as BERA (2011) insists, undoubtedly proved helpful in keeping within the procedural and situational ethical demands. I continue to honour all these ethical considerations in my research programme as the BERA (2018) guidelines enjoin.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, I explained the research design for the in-depth qualitative case study. I proposed engaging multiple categories of stakeholders including headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents through semi-structured interviews, FGDs, observations, and analysing relevant documents to enable me to collect data that are rich and can allow valid and reliable conclusions to be drawn. In chapter 5, the research design is implemented.

## **Chapter 5. Implementing the research design**

### **Introduction**

The research implementation process was deployed in two phases: the preliminary phase involving a mini piloting in Cambridge, selecting and justifying research sites, negotiating access and trialling, and the main study phase.

### **Preliminary phase**

#### **Mini piloting in Cambridge**

The three-week mini piloting in Cambridge was conducted in May 2016 during which six pupils (ages 9-13) of Ghanaian cultural background were interviewed in their homes. Three visits were also made to a primary school north of Cambridge where some of the pupils were enrolled. Ideally, since the actual research site was the Central Region of Ghana, it would have been more appropriate to conduct the mini piloting, full-blown trialling of the research design and the main study in that region. However, for practical and logistical reasons I piloted my research instruments, especially the interviews and observations, in Cambridge to enable me to practise the techniques of interviewing, observing, analysing, and to use the lessons learned to prepare for the trialling in Ghana.

Right from the negotiation of access to the interviewees through to the conduct of interviews and finally recording my observations during the mini piloting, I found that knowing and showing respect for institutional customs, as well as for every individual, was crucial. Evaluations from the interviewees and their parents showed they appreciated good self-presentation, active listening, and clarity of the questions. Perhaps, the most important lesson I learnt was the extreme importance of authentic and good interpersonal relationships, which I needed to maintain with the participants both during the trialling and the main study. The piloting gave me an indication that I must always leave no doubt in the minds of the participants that I knew what I was doing. Above all, the piloting provided a preliminary space that enhanced my confidence as a researcher. As Oliver (2003) remarks, such a precautionary measure provides the ethical benefit of gauging the suitability, and the degree of inconvenience from my research instruments that was acceptable to the participants. With these lessons in mind, I began the process of accessing the trial and main research sites but

before expanding on this, it is important to elucidate the rationale for the choice of my research sites.

### **Justifying research sites in Ghana**

The term ‘research sites’ has both comprehensive and strict meanings in this context. In its comprehensive sense, it denotes the Central Region of Ghana where I conducted both the trial and the main study. The image below is the map of Ghana with the Central Region represented by the red area at the bottom of the map.



**Figure 5.1 The map of Ghana indicating the Central Region**

Source: Google maps (accessed on the 8/03/2018)

The Central Region is one of the ten regions of Ghana where the Leadership for Learning principles were introduced. The region was chosen because as I discovered from Jull et al.’s (2012) work, researchers at the University of Cape Coast’s Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, which is in the Central Region, played a pioneering role in planning, introducing and implementing the principles in Ghanaian basic schools. The IEPA remains a rich depository of human and information resources for the Ghana LfL programme and makes the region the best for the research. The then director of IEPA (a post that changes every three years), who oversees the Ghana LfL programme, recommended three LfL basic schools in the Central Region for my research. It was in these schools, which have embraced the LfL principles as part of their ethos (Jull et al., 2014) that I spent eight months interacting with headteachers, teachers, pupils, parents and other stakeholders of education.

When I was reflecting on which schools to select for my research, I knew that there were at least 10 LfL basic schools in the Central Region, some of which are situated in rural and



others in urban areas. This provided me with options to select rural and urban schools; large and small schools; high and low academic success or richer and poorer schools.

I opted for one poor urban school where I spent eight weeks trialling my research design, and then two other poor urban schools where I spent five months conducting the main research. The decision to limit the main study to two poor urban schools was influenced primarily by considerations of feasibility given the time and resource constraints. My choice was also informed by other factors which gave these schools a comparative advantage. First, unlike the other LfL schools whose headteachers had been transferred to new schools, the headteachers of the selected schools, members of the cohort of headteachers introduced to the LfL principles in 2009, had remained heads of their schools. This was an important consideration for me because the headteachers constituted a great repository of knowledge and experience regarding the incorporation and sustainability of the principles in their schools. Conducting my research in such schools almost eight years after the introduction of the principles meant that the schools would have practised them for at least five years, a period which Fullan (2016) describes as sufficient for an educational innovation to have been well embedded. The stakeholders would also have experienced the principles enough to be able to share concretely and substantially the processes involved in their successful incorporation and the concomitant impacts. Second, these schools were co-educational, which enabled me to collect data that embed gender-inclusive perspectives.

The two selected schools were also recommended by the director of IEPA as exceptional regarding success in incorporating the LfL principles and for their accessibility and proximity to the University of Cape Coast. Easy access to the University enabled me regularly to consult with the IEPA director and my field supervisor. It was against this background that the two less economically endowed urban LfL schools were selected for the main research. I acknowledge that although the trialling school was a single sex school and does not satisfy the co-educational criterion, it satisfied all the other requirements and was strongly recommended by the then IEPA director for the trialling. These considerations informed my choice of Central Region and two economically less endowed urban schools for the research.

### **Accessing the research sites**

My primary objective during this period (31<sup>st</sup> August to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016) was to be ethically, psychologically, and technically ready to start the field research – both the trialling and the main research. This included obtaining all the requisite formal approvals from all the

necessary authorities to access the schools. To this end, upon arrival in Ghana on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2016, I took a few days to settle down. While doing so, I made phone calls to headteachers of the selected schools to build familiarity with them. Considering the important role of my field supervisor in guiding me during the fieldwork, I met with him twice prior to the start of the data collection: first, for introductions, familiarisation and preliminary discussions on my proposed fieldwork, and second, to discuss a schedule of supervisions. This was followed by the process of negotiating formal permission and access to the research sites. I should clarify that I negotiated access to the trial and main study schools concurrently with a series of informal visits to the research schools to identify their locations and meet the headteachers. These visits helped me to gain some insights into the schools' disposition towards my presence and how best to prepare for more formal access to them.

The education offices that are responsible for granting permission for access to the trial and main study schools approved my applications (letters in appendices 1 & 2). Thus, the fieldwork started as planned. The reception was warm and that inspired me to take advantage and seek counsel from the headteachers about any cultural and ethical sensitivities which needed attention.

### **Trialling the research design: lessons for the main research**

Unlike the pilot, the trial was bigger in scale (Polit, Beck, & Hungler, 2001), and lasted for eight weeks (26<sup>th</sup> September to 28<sup>th</sup> November 2016). It involved thirty-one stakeholders including the headteacher (1), teachers (12), pupils (12), parents (5), and PTA chair (1). They all took part in individual interviews along with 2 focus group discussions, 10 classroom lesson observations, and 6 document analyses. The trialling helped me to test and to correct any foreseeable risk relating to the research design before the main study began. The period was characterised by rolling out the research design in its entirety. This involved sampling of participants, and trialling of the research instruments in preparation for the main research. Thus, my interest was on the lessons learnt from the process.

As figure 4.2 (p. 46) which summarised the research design indicated, seven categories of participants were proposed, and the aim was to triangulate the data that would be generated through them (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Given that each of these categories was considered because of their privileged knowledge (Denscombe, 2010) of the school, it was appropriate as Cohen et al. (2018) encouraged, to consider purposive sampling. Deploying this sampling technique worked well for selecting all the other categories of participants

except the parents. For practical reason such as limited availability it was difficult to access parents based on purposive sampling. What was feasible was to snowball parents through the support of the headteacher, teachers, pupils or other parents. It was also realised that the criteria of including and excluding parents based on only ability to communicate in English as initially planned was posing the danger of collecting data which were skewed since some parents were unable to speak English. Thus, two lessons that emerged for the main research were to include snowball sampling and to sample participants from a broad spectrum of linguistic as well as professional bases including literate and illiterate, and male and female parents. The table below, the fruits of the trialling process, summarises the criteria which were used for selecting the key participants for the main research.

**Table 5.1 Sampling techniques and criteria for inclusion of participants**

Participant categories	Sampling Technique	Criteria for inclusion: based on
Headteacher	Purposive	Capacity as headteacher, knowledge, and willingness
Teachers	Purposive	Privileged knowledge/length of service in researched school, gender, availability, willingness, sense of critical balance
Pupils	Purposive	Gender, ability to communicate in English, willingness, age, criticality, performance (high, medium and low attainers to gain a balanced picture of the learning experiences), family background (literate, illiterate, rich or poor homes, with single parent, both parents, or guardian), and physical condition (disability) <sup>6</sup>
Parents	Snowballing	Availability and ability to communicate in English
PTA chair	Purposive	Capacity as PTA chair and willingness
SMC chair	Purposive	Capacity as SMC chair and willingness
CS	Purposive	Capacity as CS and willingness
Basics Six & Nine-year groups	Purposive	Length of stay and status as transitioning classes

It was only in undertaking iterative on-field analysis of the data as recommended for qualitative research (Becker, 1958; Yin, 2014) that I realised that just as I had mapped the research questions to participants (appendix 5), and instruments to participants (appendix 7), it was crucial to map the research instruments to the research questions. This was because it enabled me to clarify which instrument(s) should constitute the main or auxiliary source of data for each research question. Taking RQ one, for example, which sought the participants' understanding of the LfL principles, it was important to clarify which of the instruments – interviews, FGDs, observations, or documentary analysis would be the main or supporting

---

<sup>6</sup> Physical condition such as visual impairment was included as a criterion only in School B.

sources of data that would address it. Thus, this was a lesson from the trial. For a table mapping the research instruments to the research questions, see appendix 6.

Turning to the data collection methods, Cohen et al. (2011), and Flick (2015) argue that observations in real world research such as mine allow for more direct access to events and human practices in such a way that ‘live’ first-hand authentic data can be collected. But this requires designing an observation schedule that is user friendly to capture information in a more orderly manner for easy retrieval and analysis. My initial observation schedule/grid proved less than user friendly, a lesson which inspired me to redesign a coding scheme for classroom observations in the main research. Another important lesson was the emergence of the idea of opportunistic observation; opportunistic because it was not part of the initial design to observe life in the wider community as a way of corroborating what participants would share during the interviews. Such observations proved to be a valuable source of data in the main research.

Written formative evaluation of the trialling process by the participants revealed that self-presentation, clarity, and simplicity of posing the interview questions were helpful. However, use of the word ‘parent’ was, for social considerations, sensitively replaced by using more neutral words like guardians/caretakers. The order of the interview questions which started with more difficult ones like participants’ understanding of concepts including learning and leadership was reversed with simpler questions being posed first.

Additionally, certain challenges including failure to access all the participants, lack of fidelity to agreed schedules, emotional outburst of some participants during interviews, lack of internet connectivity, difficulty in keeping focus group discussants in tune with the topic, and frustrations in recording and coding of observation data were all useful lessons that fully prepared me for the main research. The fact that the data collection instruments were practically and ethically feasible bolstered my confidence in the research design and convinced me that it was ready for the main research.

## **Main study phase**

### **Composition of research schools**

For the purposes of anonymity, as BERA (2018) ethical guidelines reiterate, I refer to the two research schools as A and B both of which are co-educational. Established in 1962, school A’s vision was: ‘To promote high academic performance, moral life and culture of the people’. School B was established in 1984 by the authorities of a nearby senior high school

(SHS) to meet the educational needs of children of the staff. However, in 2004, the Government of Ghana absorbed it as one of the public basic schools and added it to the list of five other schools within which to pilot inclusive education in the Central Region. As the narrative of the headteacher and available documents revealed, the school's vision was: 'To produce total quality of education which would help to effect change in behaviour'. This vision was to be achieved by 'creating a conducive atmosphere for effective teaching and learning'. The table below provides a comparative data of the two schools for easy reference.

**Table 5.2 Comparison of school A and B**

Indicators	School A	School B
Year of establishment	1962	1984
Gender of headteacher	Male	Female
Pupils' population	375	334
Male pupils	190	176
Female pupils	185	158
Special needs pupils (visually-impaired and autistic)	Not applicable	21
Distance of pupils' homes from school	0.5 to 2 kilometres	2 to 7 kilometres
Teachers' population	22	27
Male teachers	3	11
Female teachers	19	16
Regular teachers	22	19
Resource teachers <sup>7</sup>	Not applicable	8
Parents' population	325	256
Literate parents (e.g. teachers, nurses, accountants)	17	52
Illiterate parents (Fishermen/fishmongers, farmers, petty traders)	308	204
Average size of literate families	5	5
Average size of illiterate families	8	8

Some points of convergences between the two schools can be deduced from the data above. Both schools were co-educational with pupils between ages five and nineteen coming mostly from the fishing communities<sup>8</sup> along the Atlantic Ocean coastline, and adequately staffed with qualified and trained teachers with varied professional experiences and qualifications. It can be inferred from table 5.2 that the trend of gender parity of pupils (boys and girls) in both schools is similar with the enrolment of more boys than girls. A similar observation is true

<sup>7</sup> Resource teachers were those who specialised in special needs education whose primary responsibility was to support the special needs pupils with explanations, and transcription of their work for the regular teachers.

<sup>8</sup> Fishing communities in Ghana including those of my research are usually poor urban slums characterised by high population of illiterate fishermen and fishmongers.

regarding staff gender parity although in this case, there were more female than male staff in each school. These inter-school convergences enabled me to corroborate as well as enrich my knowledge in emergent socio-cultural and economic issues in the schools and the communities.

There were divergences which were equally helpful guides in my approach to the research in each school. School A and B belong to two different circuits – sub-districts, and whereas school A is located within a specific coastal fishing community, school B belonged to no specific community. In school A, none of the staff or pupils expressed any known issues of disabilities of any kind. However, school B was an inclusive basic school with some of its members being less able – autistic and visually-impaired (VI), a dynamic which I was initially not aware of and wondered about the ethical implications, advantages and disadvantages, of including the VI pupils in the research. Nonetheless, after consultations with the headteacher, and my main and field supervisors, there was a unanimous view that it would be beneficial to include them, and indeed, it was, as will be realised from their contributions to the narratives in subsequent chapters.

Despite that, both schools have a high proportion of illiterate fisherfolk parents with an average family size of eight. School A has more illiterate parents – about 95 per cent compared to 80 per cent for school B. The remainder were mostly professionals who were economically stable with an average family size of about five. Whereas most of the pupils in school A resided within 0.5 to 2 kilometres from the school, many pupils from school B walked between 2 to 7 kilometres. This is because as the individual interviews with pupils, parents, the headteacher, and my observations revealed, this school was not located within a particular community but drew its pupils from scattered communities. These characteristics provided the unique context for the unfolding of the LfL story in these schools.

### **Profiles of research participants**

In table 5.1, I explained the categories of participants, sampling techniques used and the criteria for inclusion. In tables 5.3 and 5.4 below I use codes to represent participants, their profiles – gender, status and length of time with the research schools, and where applicable, Ghana Education Service. These profiles offer insights into participants' previous experiences and possible relationship with the LfL principles.

**Table 5.3 Participants, gender, length of time in school A and with GES**

Participant code	Status/position	Gender	Years at school at time of research	Years with GES at time of research
AHT	Headteacher	Male	7	26
AT1	Form teacher	Male	8	12
AT2	Class teacher	Male	5	8
AT3	Form teacher	Female	9	15
AT4	Class teacher	Female	8	17
AT5	Teacher	Female	7	20
AT6	Form teacher	Female	6	15
AT7	Class teacher	Female	9	16
AT8	Assistant headteacher	Female	6	29
AT9	Teacher	Male	7	26
AP1	Parent (literate)	Male	11	NA (Not applicable)
AP2	Parent (illiterate)	Female	7	NA
AP3	Parent (literate)	Female	15	36
AP4	Parent (illiterate)	Female	8	NA
AP5	Parent (illiterate)	Male	6	NA
AP6	Parent (literate)	Male	7	NA
AS3, AS4, AS6, AS7, AS8, AS10, AS12	Pupils	Females	Between 5 and 12	
AS1, AS2, AS5, AS9, AS11	Pupils	Males	Between 5 and 12	
APTA-chair	PTA-chair	Male	17	NA
ASMC-chair	SMC-chair	Male	12	NA
ACS	CS	Male	4	19

**Table 5.4 Participants, gender, length of time in school B and with GES**

Participant code	Status/position	Gender	Years at school at time of research	Years with GES at time of research
BHT	Headteacher	Female	9	24
BT1	Resource teacher	Male	6	10
BT2	Resource teacher	Male	7	16
BT3	Form teacher	Male	5	13
BT4	Form teacher	Female	13	24
BT5	Teacher	Female	8	8
BT6	Class/assistant headteacher	Female	14	30
BT7	Teacher	Male	5	22
BT8	Class teacher	Male	7	13
BP1	Parent (literate)	Female	8	11
BP2	Parent (literate)	Female	9	19
BP3	Parent (literate)	Male	10	21
BP4	Parent (literate)	Male	12	NA
BP5	Parent (literate)	Male	20	36
BP6	Parent (illiterate)	Female	8	NA
BS1, BS3, BS4, BS7, BS8, BS10, BS12	Pupils	Females	Between 5 and 12	
BS2, BS5, BS6, BS9, BS11	Pupils	Males	Between 5 and 12	
BPTA-chair	PTA-chair	Male	11	16
BSMC-chair	SMC-chair	Male	13	16
BCS	CS	Male	5	21

The participant codes are used to represent the interview and focus group participants to ensure their anonymity, and to identify their views – direct double quotes or paraphrases in the thesis. For example, AHT denotes headteacher of school A; AT1 means teacher participant one of school A; AS1 connotes student<sup>9</sup> one of school A. Similarly, parent one of school A is represented by AP1; APTA-chair and ASMC-chair refer to Parent-Teacher Association and School Management Committee chairmen of school A respectively. ACS represents its circuit supervisor. The same trend applies to school B where for example, BHT means headteacher of school B; BT1 denotes teacher participant one of school B, and BS1 represents student one of school B. Having clarified this, I discuss the data collection.

### **Data collection methods**

Data collection in case study research typically employs multiple data collection techniques. The tradition, according to Yin (2014) has been to interview participants; observe social situations which Spradley (1980) describes as actors, activities and place; and analyse documents and physical artefacts. Considering that this research is an in-depth case study seeking deeper understanding of the processes of incorporating an innovation, data capture using a combination of these mechanisms was appropriate. The interviews, FGDs, observation and documentary analysis were the main sources through which I gathered rich data to address the research questions. The multiple sources provide different perspectives that help to challenge and reframe preconceptions (Atkinson & Delamont, 2008), triangulate the evidence, and enrich the narrative to enhance the validity and reliability of the research (Adami & Kiger, 2005; Cohen et al., 2011). Its relationship to trustworthiness of research findings may have inspired Stake (2006) to define triangulation as a process of repetitious data gathering and critical review of what participants say to gain assurance that what is being said is more than mere impressions from the participants and the researcher.

#### *Semi-structured interviews*

This research is about human affairs and actions in relation to the incorporation of the ideals of the LfL programme. Thus, interviews were crucial tools for collecting data in such

---

<sup>9</sup> In Ghana the word ‘pupils’ is used for children who attend basic schools so ‘student’ is used here to avoid any confusion in the codes for parents and pupils since both words start with ‘p’



situations (Yin, 2014). The semi-structured interviews proved helpful in enabling me to reach, as Perakyla (2008) says, areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible. All the contributors participated in the one-on-one semi-structured interviews, each lasting 50 minutes to 2.5 hours. Even though Denscombe (2014) argues that 40 minutes to an hour is long enough for enough data collection without taxing the interviewees, the dynamics of some of the interview situations led to much longer conversations. Guided by the objective of the research, and Merriam's (1998) advice, an interview guide or protocol was prepared for each category of the participants (appendix 8). It was the use of these protocols in conjunction with the main trialling themes which enabled me to engage with the participants and to encourage them to share their knowledge, perceptions, perspectives, and experiences in reasonable depth (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The interviews with the main participants – headteachers, teachers, and pupils aimed to generate discussions and reflections on their understanding and practice of the LfL principles as well as factors which promoted or inhibited their incorporation. The main themes of the LfL principles – learning, leadership, dialogue and accountability; how they were practised; and the factors that promoted or inhibited the LfL incorporation were discussed and reflected upon through the interviews with the main participants. The auxiliary participants – parents, PTA and SMC chairs, and the circuit supervisors shared their views on the kinds of changes they observed in the children and in the schools, and the factors that accounted for such changes through the medium of the interviews. Typical of in-depth case study designs, I was amply flexible and used prompts and probes during the interviews to allow for rich data to be gathered.

These advantages notwithstanding, I was not impervious to the commonly cited weaknesses of interviews – subjectivity, bias (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007), and 'interviewer effect', which Denscombe (2014) describes as the influence the researcher's identity, self-presentation, and involvement have on the amount and truthfulness of information interviewees disclose. That was why observations, FGDs and documentary analysis were employed to corroborate the interview data.

### *Focus group discussions*

The interviews and FGDs aim to gain deeper insights into the incorporation of the LfL principles but focus groups involve more than one participant at a time. A focus group is considered by Cohen et al. (2018) as an adjunct to group interviews, implying that focus groups are supplementary or subordinate to group interviews. But Denscombe (2014) argues that FGDs is distinct because unlike group interviews where the researcher is the focal point,

in focus groups, the focus is on the session and group dynamics. The researcher's role in focus groups, according to Krueger (1998), is that of an 'enlightened novice' who stimulates the discussants to share their ideas on an issue. In this study, the FGDs enabled me to listen, understand and gather information (Krueger & Casey, 2009) on how teachers and pupils felt or thought about leadership, learning, dialogue and accountability, how they performed these activities and the factors that promoted or hindered the practice.

The FGDs provided not only collective or near collective views on issues like the role of modern technology on quality education delivery but generated new insights through the interactional dynamics of the participants (Kamberelis & Dimitradis, 2008). Based on Stewart and Shamdasani's (1998) advice, four focus groups (one for pupils and another for teachers in each school) with between five to eight discussants (Burke & Christensen, 2004; Krueger & Casey, 2009) were conducted. A sample of the FGDs protocol is in appendix 9.

The crucial challenge with FGDs was not only how to manage the interactions but also creating the atmosphere of trust for the participants to share their opinions freely (Morgan, 1988). This, according to Denscombe (2014) and BERA's (2018) ethical guidelines, implies that the discussants need to be assured of confidentiality which I faithfully observed. A shortcoming of interviews and FGDs was that they were unable to provide a means for me to check whether what the participants said was what they practised. Thus, observations were embraced to complement them.

### *Observations*

The purpose of the school-level and outside school observations was to corroborate and enrich the data I captured through the interviews and FGDs despite that it was also a main source of data in some situations, for example, the classrooms. The observations were overt to avoid violating the principle of informed consent, invading the privacy of the participants, and treating them instrumentally (Cohen et al., 2018). Considering that this study took place in schools, I switched between being a participant and non-participant observer depending on the activity that was observed (Swain, 2006). In staff meetings, I observed as a non-participant but when I was sharing meals with staff and pupils in the schools' canteens, I assumed the role of a participant observer. Bearing in mind the propensity of observations to cause participant reactivity (Robson, 2002), I tried to be as unobtrusive as possible through gentle but active ethical presence.

Observation started as soon as I gained formal access to the schools, and it was focussed on the general school atmosphere, the quality as well as the presence or absence of physical

infrastructure like classrooms, toilets and furniture, the organisational culture, free flow of information and opportunities for teachers and pupils to lead. In addition, I observed in classrooms pupil-teacher interactions, pupil-pupil interactions, seating arrangements, and classroom orderliness. Detailed observation schemes can be found in appendix 10.

### *Documentary analysis*

To further enrich my data, I analysed some relevant available documents about the research schools. These are summarised below.

**Table 5.5 Documents analysed and reasons for inclusion**

Type of document	Reason (s) for analysing it
Minutes of PTA meetings	To understand how headteachers perceived and implemented the LfL principles: if parents were introduced to the LfL principles; how that was done; how parents and school collaborated to incorporate the principles
Minutes of staff meetings	To analyse the themes of meetings to see if the LfL principles were part; how the headteachers advertised them to staff; the staff familiarity with them; strategies for their incorporation; staff-staff and staff-headteacher dialogue
Teachers' attendance registers	To analyse the trends of teacher regularity and punctuality to school
Pupils' attendance registers	To analyse the trends of pupil regularity to school
School-based assessment (SBA) registers	To analyse amount and type of tasks teachers give and perform over time and pupils' overall performance
Pupils' exercise books	To analyse giving, doing and marking of exercises: class and homework
Lesson timetables	To gain understanding of the subjects that are taught, and the weight given to each subject
Duty rosters	To gain insights into how responsibilities are shared

Bell and Waters (2014) in *Doing your research project* call these kinds of documents inadvertent sources because they are produced for original intentions other than what I analysed them for. Thus, evidence gathered from such documents is unwitting evidence (Marwick, 2001) since the evidence is not what the original author(s) wanted to impart but is nonetheless beneficial to my purpose as a researcher. The inadvertent nature of these documents, I argue, addresses a concern raised by Yin (2014) that documents can be biased based on who authored them.

### **Data collection in school A and B**

I collected data in these schools over a period of five months from 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017 alternating between them weekly. This enabled me to obtain a more comprehensive understanding by enabling important issues or insights which arose in one

school to be followed up in the other. Table 5.6 below summarises the number of participants involved and the research methods I engaged in the data collection.

**Table 5.6 Participants and research methods deployed**

Source of participants/data	Category of participants	Number involved	Research method involved in		Number of methods deployed
School A	Headteacher	1	Semi-structured interviews		1 (with one male)
	Teachers	9	Semi-structured interviews		9 (with 6 females and 3 males participating)
			Focus Group Discussions		1 group (3 females and 3 males)
	Pupils	12	Semi-structured interviews		12 (with 7 girls and 5 boys)
			Focus Group Discussions		1 group (3 girls and 3 boys)
School B	Headteacher	1	Semi-structured interviews		1 (female)
	Teachers	8	Semi-structured interviews		8 (3 females and 5 males)
			Focus Group Discussions		1 group (3 females and 4 males)
	Pupils	12	Semi-structured interviews		12 (7 girls and 5 boys)
			Focus Group Discussions		1 (4 girls and 3 boys)
Outside of schools' A and B walls (Auxiliary participants)	Parents	12 (6 each)	Semi-structured interviews		12 (6 females and 6 males)
	PTA chair	2 (1 each)	Semi-structured interviews		2 (2 males)
	SMC chair	2 (1 each)	Semi-structured interviews		2 (2 males)
	CS	2 (1 each)	Semi-structured interviews		2 (2 males)
Within and outside both schools			Observations	Class lessons	62 (30 in school A and 32 in school B)
				General school-level	Anytime present in the school
				Community-level	8
			Documentary analysis		16 (8 from each school)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 categories of participants</b>	<b>61 participants</b>	<b>4 instruments (interviews, FGDs, Observations and Documentary analysis)</b>		<b>61 Interviews 4 Focus Group Discussions 62 Observations (Lessons) 8 Observations (Community) 16 Documents (8 each school)</b>

As illustrated in table 5.6, I conducted interviews and FGDs in the two schools with the stakeholders. Observations and documentary analysis were also undertaken within and

outside of the schools. These were carried out after consent forms were voluntarily signed, venues arranged, and appropriate permissions including use of audio and videotaping were granted. I should state that deployment of these methods did not follow a rigid order but sometimes applied concurrently, especially the observations, interviews and FGDs. Thus, the way they are ordered below is merely for systematic purposes.

61 face-to-face interviews were conducted – 31 in school A and 30 in school B in familiar and safe locations chosen by the stakeholders to enable them to talk freely and with more confidence (Drever, 2003). The interviews were audiotaped and most of them took place in the schools except a few with parents, who, because of convenience and time constraints chose to have them in their homes. I also engaged headteachers, and some teachers, pupils and parents in a series of informal interviews which provided valuable information. All the interviews were conducted in English except four which were conducted in ‘fante’ – the local language, with parents who could not speak or understand English at all. With explicit permission from them, I engaged a research assistant who interviewed, transcribed and translated the data into English for me.

A total of 4 FGDs were organised in English in the two schools where each school had 1 focus group composed of teachers and another of pupils. As table 5. 6 shows, between 6 and 7 discussants participated in each FGD, which is based on the recommendation by Krueger and Casey (2009) for academic research. With a circular seating arrangement that created a spirit of collegiality, discussants spent between 1 hour 45 minutes and 2 hours and 15 minutes discussing themes including leadership, co-agency, the urgency of physical infrastructure and social infrastructure in relation to learning, and the influence of modern technology on quality education delivery.

I have indicated in table 5.6 that I made three categories of on-site observations – daily general school-wide, 8 opportunistic community-level, and 62 class lessons (30 in school A and 32 in school B). In conducting the fieldwork, I considered myself as a participant observer of the social situations. However, as explained earlier in this chapter, I was flexible in terms of the degree of participation depending on the situation. Passive observation – being present at the scene of the actors and finding an ‘observation post’ to gain an idea of what was going on without participating or interacting with them to any reasonable extent (Spradley, 1980) was used for the community observations. It helped me to avert or at least reduce the ethical concern of invading their privacy (Cohen et al., 2011) but also to ensure my safety as a researcher (BERA, 2018). Moderate observation, however, was used in the school and classroom level observations. It was the moderate type of participation which

ethically enjoined me to maintain a balance between being an insider and an outsider, and between participation and observation in the school, and I think keeping this balance was crucial in maintaining my identity as a researcher with ethical consciousness and reflexivity.

The general school and community-level observations were neither audio nor videotaped for ethical reasons such as invasion of privacy. However, I took relevant photos, some of which are used to illustrate some realities in chapters 6, 9 and 10. In addition, the socio-cultural environment, child-based economic activities – selling items after school, running of errands; and technological activities such as video games and betting centres in the communities were observed and noted.

Observing lessons in the classroom community which I considered as crucial because of its direct relationship with learning (Levin & Pekar, 2007) involved a moderate observational approach. In the classrooms of Basics Six and Nine (see table 5.1 on page 51 for reasons for choice), I observed directly and through audio and video recording of the lessons in English, Mathematics and Science – EMS (30 minutes per lesson for Basic 6 and 35 minutes for Basic 9) to which the Ghana Education Service allocates most time in the curriculum. This multi-approach aimed to make the observational data authentic given that it helps to mitigate personal biases which expose observational data to the accusation of being less rigorous, soft, relativistic, and impressionistic (Dey, 1995; Creswell, 2013). The video recording which involved the use of a *GoPro Hero04* camera fixed at a discreet vantage point – on a wall at the back of the classroom enabled inter-rater reliability (IRR) analysis between me and a second coder. IRR is the extent to which two independent coders of a variable, for example, ‘enthusiasm of pupils’, agree (Gwet, 2014) and it aims to enhance reliability and validity. Other indicators inductively developed on the LfL principles which were inter-rated included active participation in classroom, decision making, and care of common property.

### **Reflexivity: Epiphanic ethical and methodological challenges and how they were handled**

Considering that this research involved human participants, ethical dilemmas (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004) and methodological challenges were unavoidable, and being reflexive was crucial to enhance the credibility of the research (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008). Reflexivity is a methodological self-consciousness that enabled me to engage in explicit self-aware meta-analysis of my role in the research process and acknowledgment of its impact on the meaning and context of the experience under investigation (Finlay, 2002; Horsburgh, 2003). Thus, it is

a tool through which I sought to increase the integrity and trustworthiness of the findings by, as Finlay cites Richardson (1994), monitoring and unmasking complex personal ideological agendas hidden in the research process.

My first challenge, and it linked to the ethical issue of positionality, was about participants' desire to know my personal life or identity beyond being a researcher. I was aware that honesty must be part of the defining marks of researchers, and I owe the research participants the responsibility regarding their mental welfare (Kane, 1990). Thus, it would be ethically wrong, as Abbott and Sapsford (1998) argue, for me not to respect the views of the participants which I know were intricately connected to their physical, social and emotional wellbeing. I also knew that any deceit by giving a wrong identity could have negative implications for future research (Bassey, 2009). At the same time, disclosing my priestly identity would have serious implications on my positionality as a researcher, and the quantity and quality of data I wanted to collect. It was important that nobody knew my identity as a Roman Catholic priest at the time of the research because priests in Ghana are considered demigods – mortals raised to divine rank.

However, in accordance with ethical principles of honesty, I emphasized that I was not married since participants specifically asked but insisted I would talk more about my personal life at the end of the fieldwork when the pressure of the research would have lessened. Faithful to my promise, on the last day of the research when I met with all the staff and pupils of each school on the same day to thank them, I disclosed my identity by dressing in my priestly attire – the cassock. There were reactions of shock and amazement from both schools, and I noted down the following comment by two teachers: “Eeei Reverend Father, we hope you like what we shared during the interviews and that we did not offend you with some of the things we said”. This comment confirmed that if I had disclosed my identity, the participants would have told me what I wanted to hear.

The second challenge was an ethical dilemma *in situ* which emerged just before school A's teachers' FGDs commenced. When I sampled teachers for the FGDs, it was based on competence, experience, availability, criticality, gender, and the ability to communicate freely and easily. In keeping with my promise to adhere faithfully to the participants' confidentiality and anonymity, none of the selected participants knew who was included until we gathered to commence the discussions. It was only at this point that one of the teachers, upon realising that another colleague was part of the group decided to pull out of the discussions. When he called me aside he was categorical that if he had known that the colleague was participating, he would have rejected my request at the outset because he did

not trust the colleague and could not share his experiences in that person's presence. Many things immediately ran through my mind; was it more ethically appropriate to accept his request considering that in the consent form I clarified that any participant could withdraw from the research at will? From the lens of simplistic fidelity to my own promise, it would be appropriate to accept his withdrawal. However, in view of the spirit behind the withdrawal, which was not necessarily because he did not want to be part of the research but because of the presence of someone he was uncomfortable with, I thought his withdrawal could lead to unhelpful interpretations by the other teachers given its timing and their possible knowledge of the unfriendly relationship between the two teachers. These interpretations could affect the convivial atmosphere of the discussions.

To handle this dilemma, I asked the other participants to give me a few minutes before we started the group discussions to enable me to discuss the situation with the disgruntled teacher. I acknowledged the fact that I had no idea of an impasse between the two teachers and explained that their selection was contingent on their satisfying my sampling criteria. Further, I gently reminded him of my promise in the consent forms to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality, which was the reason I could not tell the discussants who was included or not. More importantly, the issues we were going to discuss connected to the pupils' welfare and growth, and that his commitment was appreciated by other stakeholders. Thus, his participation in the discussions was going to be helpful. After a few minutes of reflection, he rescinded his decision and participated in the discussions. Resolving this issue meant that the discussions not only started behind schedule but that the rest of the discussants were kept waiting. This called for a more diplomatic way of keeping the atmosphere relaxed to ensure free and active participation. To this end, some of the snacks which I had bought to share with the school on the last day of the research were shared with the discussants to motivate and create some level of conviviality. Oppenheim (1992) encourages the idea of motivating research participants because it could lead to quality responses. But my action was to address a contextual ethical challenge and did not impinge on the free decision of participants to contribute, something in which I later realised the 2018 ethical guidelines of BERA requires researchers to exercise some circumspection.

Even though the trialling helped to address some potential methodological challenges, my inability to trial the classroom observation coding scheme through inter-rater agreement before using it for the main research was a methodological deficiency. However, as I explain in the data analysis, the excellent inter-rater agreement implies the process was reliable.



### **Managing and analysing data on-field**

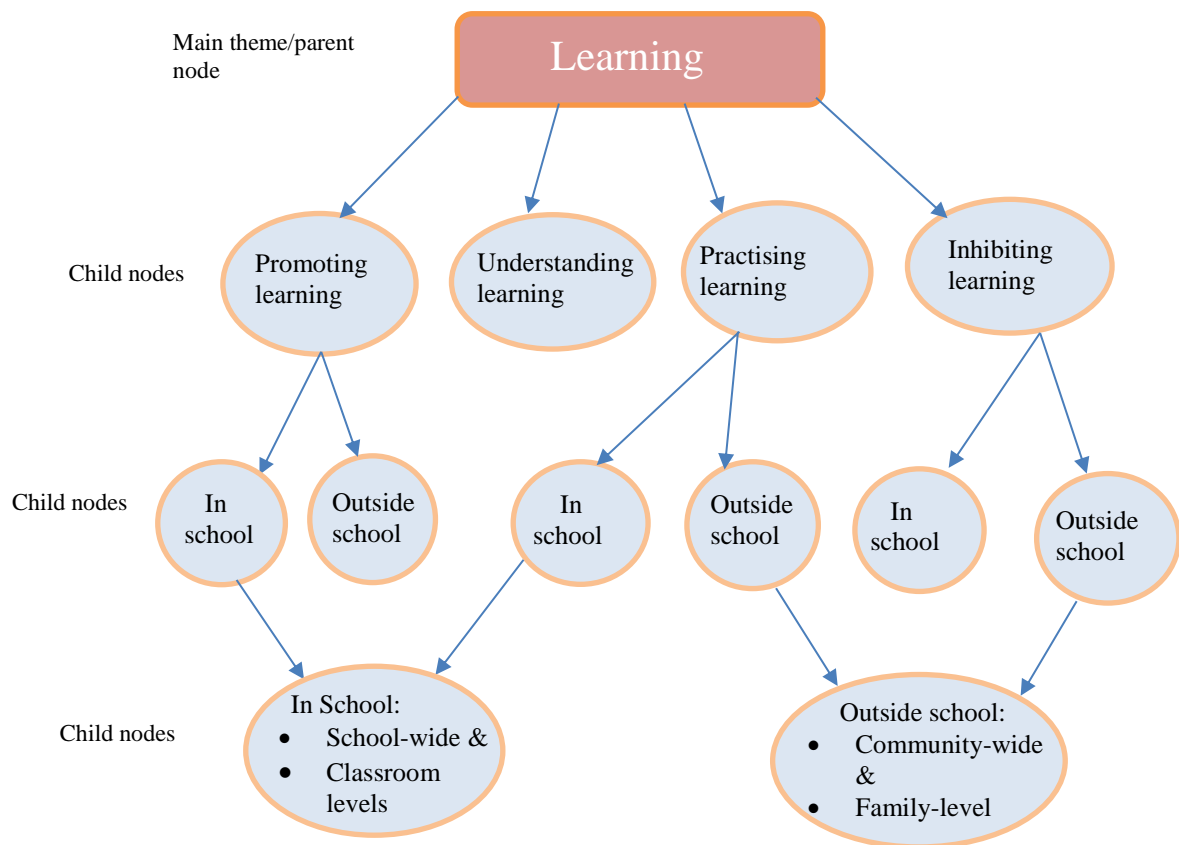
The data were managed as they were collected, and analysis was ongoing and iterative right from the onset of the research activity as recommended by Silverman (2011), Yin (2014), and Robson and McCartan (2016). All the 61 audio-recorded individual interviews, 4 FGDs, and 62 classroom observation videotapes were uploaded onto my laptop and backed up in multiple locations including three external hard drives. Notes made from documents analysed were also saved and backed up for safety and easy retrieval for analysis.

Guided by my research design, I approached the analytic process by first doing intra-case analysis and then cross-case analysis. Each of the two schools represents a case (figure 4.1), and the intra-case analysis enabled me to gain an in-depth understanding of each case's self-centring, complexity and situational uniqueness (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Given that the phenomenon of the incorporation of the LfL principles strings the two schools together in this study, I analysed across the two cases to identify similarities and differences in relation to its incorporation. The cross analysis involved constant comparison (Glaser, 1965), charting the data and mapping and interpreting them (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994) so that the individual findings can be incorporated into a holistic picture of the two cases (Becker, 1958). These qualitative analytic traditions guided my approach to the analysis.

I started the analysis by familiarising myself with the data – immersing myself in the data to gain an overview (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). This entailed listening to the audio-recordings, transcribing and 'playing' with the data. Fifty-eight of the 61 individual interview audio-recordings and all the 4 FGDs audiotapes were transcribed on-field and the remaining three audiotapes were transcribed back in Cambridge. Except the four interviews conducted in the local language which were transcribed by my research assistant, all the audiotapes were transcribed by me using a F4 transcription software. The user friendliness, flexible adjustment of playback speed, automatic rewind after each pause, insertion of timestamps, and transformation of transcripts into rich text format, which is suitable for use with NVivo, attracted me to the F4. The transcription enabled me to re-enact, relive and embody the experiences of the interviews and FGDs and to transform the sounds into words for easy reading, and validation. The audiotapes were transcribed near-verbatim with the aim of achieving transcripts which were manageable, readable, learnable and interpretable (O'Connell & Kowall, 1995). Playing with the transcripts involved reading, re-reading, examining and memoing the data (Creswell, 2013). It helped me to search for and summarise recurring concepts or issues including surprises, develop initial codes or themes informed by my research questions, and to begin the process of data abstraction and conceptualisation. As

Agar (1980) states, reading and re-reading transcripts in their entirety was crucial to get a better sense of the interview. Alongside the reading, memos – short phrases or reflective notes (Creswell, 2013) highlighting my interpretation of some interesting issues that emerged from the interviews were written on the margins of the transcripts. The transcripts were then imported via NVivo 11 software. Other qualitative data analysis software including ATLAS.ti, and HyperRESEARCH were referred to but having a good working knowledge of manipulating NVivo (which was installed on my laptop) led to the choice of that software. As Bazeley and Jackson (2013) remark, what matters is the user's skills in executing a software.

Bearing in mind the objective of this study, the research questions, insights from literature and emergent issues from the data collection, the transcripts in NVivo were further read, queried and systematically coded and broken down to facilitate the interpretation of the data (Strauss, 1990). Put differently, drawing on a priori issues relating to the research questions and emergent themes arising from the research participants allowed for identification and development of broader themes or codes, or what in NVivo is referred to as nodes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Some of the codes or nodes were conceptual, like leadership, learning, common good, collaboration, and stewardship whereas others were descriptive including the way participants practised the LfL principles, places where they were practised, the impacts of the practice, and types of factors which promoted or inhibited the practice. It is this analytic step that Ritchie and Spencer (1994) refer to as the identification and development of a thematic framework. These various codes were constantly scrutinised and compared as efforts were made to highlight variations embedded in various stakeholder interview transcripts and FGDs leading to further codes which were organised into tree nodes in NVivo. This process – labelling of categories and sub-categories (open coding) as Strauss (1990) calls it is illustrated in figure 5.2 below using the theme learning as an example.



**Figure 5.2 A tree of node and child nodes or sub-themes in NVivo**

This tree of nodes helped me to capture and drop appropriately all the significant information from the interviews and FGDs to be able to address my research questions on participants' conceptualisation of focus on learning, how they practised it, and the factors which promoted or inhibited it. At this point, I could only give provisional answers or hypotheses to my research questions. This process was replicated for all the other principles according to each school. I shared this with both my field and main supervisors in one-on-one separate fora during the fieldwork.

Regarding the class lessons videotapes, all these were watched by me and coded and rated. A proportion of these videos, 10 per cent, were recoded with a second coder in Cambridge to test inter-rater reliability or agreement. Gwet (2014) recommends that 10 per cent of such pool is acceptable for IRR to enable me to gauge how they corroborate claims made by stakeholders about practice of the LfL principles in classrooms. As outlined in table 5.5 in this chapter, the different documents analysed enabled me to isolate realities relating to how the headteachers introduced the principles, regularity and punctuality, and dialogue to corroborate what emerged from the interviews and FGDs. At this point, I returned to Cambridge to continue with the analysis and writing the thesis.

### **Analysing data off-field in Cambridge**

Back in Cambridge, for the first four months, the rest of the analysis continued. Relating to the interviews and FGDs data, I made a concerted effort to index or develop a dense texture of relationships around the axis of each theme – learning, leadership, dialogue, accountability, and change by explicitly dimensionalising each of them (Saldaña, 2016). Scrutinising the content of the axial codes facilitated charting the data (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). On a case by case basis, views from the various categories of participants were arranged thematically according to their understanding of the key concepts of the LfL principle, how they practised them, and factors which promoted or inhibited them. Charting the data provided the medium to abstract and make distilled judgements about the data within and between the cases. For example, in school A, it emerged that the headteacher, teachers and pupils converged on their perception of learning as a progressive life-long activity which enlightens and enhances human socio-affective, cognitive and psychomotor capacities. In school B, the stakeholders perceived learning as a life-long activity that involves a continued movement from the known to the unknown to bring about permanent behavioural change. The charting of the interviews and FGDs data was completed by drawing up distilled summaries that represented the views of each school.

As I have stated above, the classroom observation data were captured through a coding scheme I developed during the rigorous trialling phase of my research. Ideally, the scheme should have been subjected to inter-rater reliability (Hallgren, 2012) before its final usage to reduce personal bias, enhance methodological rigour, and ensure trustworthiness – validity and reliability of its use/posterity. Unfortunately, time and logistical constraints during the fieldwork did not allow me to inter-rate the scheme.

To overcome this limitation, the classroom observations which were video-recorded served to validate the coding scheme. While back in Cambridge, the coding scheme was tested for inter-rater agreement with a second coder – a third year PhD student from the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, before I could refer to the data gathered through it. Cohen's kappa ( $k$ ) was run to determine if there was agreement between myself and the independent second coder (Gwet, 2014). The agreements on each LfL principle are reported in table 5.7.

**Table 5.7 LfL principles and the Cohen's kappa statistics**

LfL principle	Cohen's Kappa
Focus on learning	1.00
Creating conditions favourable for learning	*
Creating a learning dialogue	1.00
Sharing leadership	0.75
Sharing accountability	1.00

\*The conditions favourable for learning were better analysed based on in situ observation rather than IRR.

Scholars like Landis and Koch (1977); Krippendorff (1980); Hallgren (2012) and Gwet (2014) concur that the possible values for kappa statistics range from -1 to 1 but they provide varied interpretation guidelines. For Landis and Koch, kappa values ranging from 0.00 to 0.20 show there is slight agreement between coders; 0.21 to 0.40 indicate fair agreement; 0.41 to 0.60 denote moderate agreement; 0.61 to 0.80 reflect substantial agreement, and 0.81 to 1.00 represent almost perfect or perfect agreement. Later, Krippendorff (1980) proposes that when variables have kappa values of less than 0.67, conclusions should be discounted for them; when between 0.67 and 0.80, tentative conclusions can be made from them, but once the values are above 0.80, definite conclusions should be made from such agreements.

Comparing the kappa values of my research and the interpretations above, it is obvious that there was predominantly perfect agreement among the independent coders on focus on learning, learning dialogue and sharing accountability, and substantial agreement about sharing leadership. This implies that an independent rater could have confidence in the coding scheme.

Guided by the research objective, distilled summaries of interviews and FGDs of each school were matched or “mapped”, to borrow Ritchie and Spencer's (1994) word to data from observations and documentary analysis to create typologies, find associations, and provide explanations which could corroborate or rival as well as enrich the interviews and FGDs. The data representing each school were then cross-analysed to identify areas of convergence and divergence through constant comparison (Glaser, 1965) so that a reliable story of the processes involved in incorporating the LfL principles in the case schools could be told.

## **Summary**

This chapter has shed light on the processes through which I implemented the research design. A pilot study in Cambridge was instrumental in preparing my budding research skills for the real world of research in schools. A full blown 8-week trial of the entire research design in Ghana offered helpful lessons which contributed to the success story of the 5-month main study. I should state that while I was aware that the experiences of parents of the VI pupils could enrich the interview data, I was unable to include them in the interviews because they were unavailable. This shortcoming notwithstanding, I gathered sufficient quality data whose analysis enabled me to answer my RQs. Following the completion of the intra and cross-case analyses of the data, five main finding chapters (6-10) were developed. Chapter 6, which is the case by case consideration of the LfL story sets the basis for chapters 7-10 which present findings emerging from both schools.

## Chapter 6. Institutionalisation of the LfL principles: case by case story

### Introduction

This chapter considers the institutionalisation of the Leadership for Learning principles in schools A and B. It presents what structures or processes at each intra-case context, were created, re-created or re-oriented to socialise stakeholders into the ideals of the principles. This is an important prelude to the subsequent four chapters where through inter-case analysis, details about how the principles were understood and practised, the resultant impacts, and the opportunities and threats to their successful incorporation will be considered. But before then let me clarify that the word institutionalisation should be understood in this thesis to represent the dynamics of incorporating the LfL principles, or socialising stakeholders of the schools into them.

### School A and the story of LfL incorporation

On my first day in this school, my attention was immediately drawn to the ubiquity of images explicitly bearing some of the LfL principles such as ‘focus on learning’ or at least signalling their presence. It was common to find these images on notice boards, doors and walls of classrooms, and the staff common room. The principle – focus on learning, was a daily slogan and an anthem at morning assembly. The description, ‘A clean school, a clean Ghana; put all litter in the bin, focus on learning’ displayed on the doors of Basics (BS) One and Two in the images below are examples.



**Figure 6.1 Images indicating the presence of the LfL story in school A**

These images served as symbols which inspired conversations about the story of LfL in this school. Starting with the headteacher – AHT, the soft-spoken man said that he was among the first beneficiaries of the LfL workshops. At the time, he was head of another

school but barely four months after benefiting from the LfL workshops, he was transferred to school A in 2010, so he introduced the LfL principles in this school.

Narrating how the principles became part of the fabric of the life of the school, AHT explained that the process had been a progressive trajectory from an individual belief and practice to a collective or shared belief and practice. The LfL story unfolded through the following action verbs – understand, believe, teach and practise. The headteacher claimed that after his exposure to the LfL principles, his new LfL-inspired broad belief was that the practising of the principles could help to improve teaching, learning and the ethos of any school. However, given that he was now in a school different from where he was when he partook in the LfL workshops, he spent time with other relevant stakeholders including teachers to do historical and existential analysis of the school. Evidence from the analysis convinced stakeholders that the prevailing poor learning outcomes were caused by the uncondusive learning environment and poor culture of learning. Thus, there was the need to address these challenges to improve the school, and he believed the LfL principles, if properly understood and embraced, could change people's attitude to be more receptive, professionally committed, and accountable. AHT added: "But I realised that the only way to succeed was to believe in everyone and get everyone involved so that we can develop shared meaning, beliefs and skills to make the innovation work". Thus, he gathered the teachers and shared his ideas about the principles – focus on learning, creating conditions favourable for learning, creating a learning dialogue, sharing leadership and accountability, and their potentiality to inspire cordial relationships, commitment, and improvement in the pupils' learning. The headteacher elucidated that it was not only about teaching the teachers but embodying/becoming what he taught, the practice.

When I probed to know if teaching the teachers was a one-shot event which yielded the necessary collaboration and shared beliefs, the headteacher said it was a demanding process that took time, patient trust, clarity of communication, constant discussions and reminders at staff meetings as well as at individual levels. This was amidst notable challenges including laggards, attitudes of indifference to change, and uncooperativeness among some teachers, pupils and parents. Nonetheless, in line with getting everyone involved, the headteacher remarked:

Together with some teachers, we try to get the pupils and parents to appreciate that the LfL principles will positively impact on the children's learning and our relationships as stakeholders. This has worked well because as people



experienced what we were trying to do, with time they form positive views about it and embrace the idea.

This means that what was originally a personal belief in the LfL ideals expanded into a shared belief and was embraced by teachers, pupils and parents.

Evidence from conversations with teachers and pupils during the interviews and FGDs showed that the ideals of the LfL were in use in the school. Examples of claims by teachers and pupils that everyone was a learner, a leader, and everyone's gifts should be appreciated were fitting signals of the spirit of the first, fourth, and second LfL principles. Teacher AT1, a male form teacher who has been teaching science in the school for the past eight years said that "we all embrace the belief that no one escapes the claws of leadership and learning, and if we learn and lead together we can improve the school".

Additionally, documents reviewed including minutes of PTA and staff meetings, attendance registers and duty rosters provided useful inroads into the examples of LfL acceptance in the school. Evidence from the review of the minutes of 42 staff meetings held between 2010 and 2016 revealed consistent expressions of appreciation as well as appeals by both teachers and headteachers regarding the principles, especially getting pupils to enjoy and focus on their learning to improve its outcomes. The headteacher's words to the teachers always were: "Make the classrooms inviting for the children". I also realised that regular staff meetings were held at the beginning, midway, and at the end of the school term during which teachers evaluated or accounted for their stewardship.

Regarding how the five principles were incorporated into the school's culture, the headteacher and teachers AT4 and AT7 said the principles were mutually interrelated, thus, it was more appropriate to teach and apply them simultaneously. AHT explained:

If you want to practise accountability, there must be shared responsibility and shared responsibility is achievable only through mutual dialogue all of which can create a conducive environment for learning. If for instance, you don't share responsibility, how are the other members going to account to you? If there is no dialogue, how will they know about the school's vision, and their responsibilities? So all of them were implemented together.

The headteacher remarked further: "As soon as teachers and pupils understood what the principles can help us achieve, we began to team up and that made the difference. I must also emphasise that critical friends like the circuit supervisor played a key role". Like the headteacher, a goodly number of the teachers, pupils and parents who were interviewed pointed to the open approach to administration as another catalyst for attitudinal

reorientations. Clarifying how this approach contributed to the flourishing of the LfL story, teacher AT9 said that it shifted the responsibilities of leading the school from an individual to committees which led and took decisions according to the boundaries of their mandate. AT6 talks about the permitting of considerable levels of devolution of power and decision making so that teachers were able to be creative and take certain decisions. As teacher AT1 resonated: “If you come up with a novel idea that works, this headteacher will gather all the teachers and make sure you share it with everyone”. These realities point to the school’s strategy of nurturing individual as well as the collective efficacies which inspired the stakeholders to teach and practise what they know and believe about the principles. Thus, within the space of six years of their introduction the ideals of the LfL gained acceptance among the stakeholders of school A.

The execution of the action verbs – know/understand, believe, teach, and embody/practise was, as the data suggest, not without challenges which continue unabated. Notable among them being the challenge of parental cooperation, household poverty, and the difficulty in getting some teachers to disrupt the status quo and to support the change process.

However, through seizing opportunities, such as the general drive for improving the school, and paying attention to effective communication, clarity of vision, exemplarity, and patient trust, the LfL story was getting more deeply rooted as part of the culture of the school. As the headteacher and most of the teachers remarked during the individual and focus group discussions: “The spirit of the LfL principles is embedded in the school. We jaw jaw everything and everyone knows what we are trying to achieve and how we are doing that” (AHT). Teacher AT1 added that the LfL’s culture of prioritising learning and mutual collaboration had sunk into teachers, pupils, most of the recent alumni and parents. Thus, this development was an assurance that the spirit of LfL had come to stay. In the next section, I consider the LfL story through the lens of school B.

### **School B and the story of LfL incorporation**

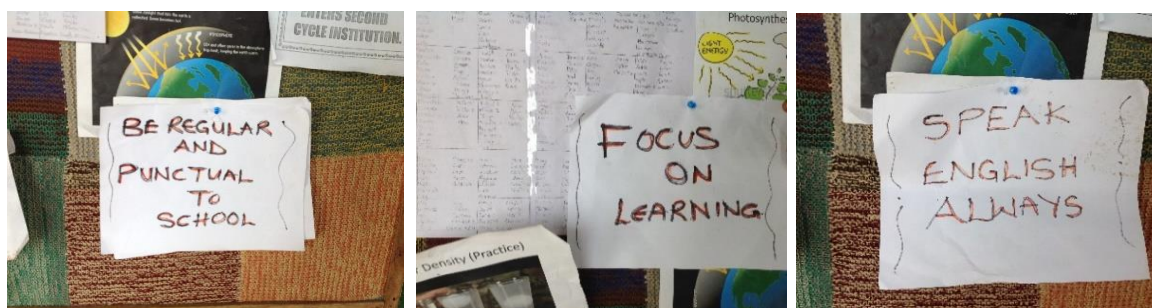
The following words from the female headteacher, BHT summarised the story of LfL in this school:

When I wake up and think of this school, I am constantly reminded of the fact that we are doing right by helping others, by yearning for change and believing that together with others we can achieve our vision as a school. This has deeply sunk into the culture of this school and clearly shows the

Leadership for Learning ideals I brought from the workshops have become the lifeblood of the school.

These words implied this co-educational basic school had positive tales to tell regarding the story of LfL.

On entering the school, the first of the three most striking and indelibly imprinted images of the school were the things I read on the pupils' noticeboard, the images of three of which are in figure 6.2 below. The second thing was the joy with which pupils grouped to learn (collaborative learning), and the third thing was the camaraderie of the headteacher and teachers exemplified in their common sharing of meals together in the school's canteen. These observations will be detailed in chapter 9. Looking at the images illustrated below, in which pupils encouraged themselves to be regular and punctual to school, focus on learning and to speak English always, provided entry points into the conversations about the LfL story in school B.



**Figure 6.2 Images indicating the presence of the LfL story in school B**

Chatting with the headteacher with whom I had the very first interview in the school, I was curious about what all these notice board descriptions meant. The headteacher remarked that these signified the spirit of the LfL principles which permeated the life of the school. Recalling her experiences, she stated that becoming a headteacher in 2008 and this school being her first posting, she inherited deep seated inter-teacher and school-parent tensions that rendered the environment hostile for teaching and learning. According to the headteacher, the root causes of these tensions were among other things, the divide and rule tactic of her predecessor, and the rejection by some parents and teachers of the idea of integrating the special needs children including the VI and autistic into the school. Caught up in this conundrum, she yearned for solutions and so when she was invited to the LfL workshops in 2009, she engaged with the conversations through the lens of how to transform her school into a safe, all-inclusive teaching and learner-friendly environment.

BHT went about introducing, implementing and sustaining the LfL story by gathering her teachers and the school management committee members and they pooled their thoughts about the key issues of the school and the way forward. They agreed, as she claimed, that there was a dire need for an environment that was inclusive, friendly, safe, and peaceful to improve teaching and learning. It was within this context she exposed the teachers to the LfL principles explaining that they could improve the school, especially its learning culture. To engender contextually shared understanding, members analysed, critiqued, and proposed the best way to incorporate the principles. The most remarkable fruits of this coalition of ideas, according to headteacher BHT and circuit supervisor BCS, were the school's vision and mission statements which I stated in chapter 5 (p. 55). The ideals of the principles and the drafted vision and mission statements were then shared with pupils, parents and some agencies so that everyone was on board. Notwithstanding the interrelated nature of the LfL principles the headteacher explained: "We prioritised the creation of a conducive environment for teaching and learning as the reference point upon which the rest of the principles were applied". Some teachers, pupils and the school management committee chairman (BSMC-chair) corroborated the headteacher's claims.

Extrapolating from the submissions so far, it could be said that the roots of the story of LfL in school B were traceable to the initial drive by the headteacher for solutions to the poor and negative teaching and learning environments she inherited. But through collaborative sharing, she was able to expose the ideals of the LfL to the school which gradually became part of the school's culture as stakeholders understood and practised them.

The narrative of school B's relationship with the LfL does not end here because as various participants shared their experiences, they hinted at impacts, opportunities, and challenges, which were very much part of the story. These will be considered in detail in chapters 9 and 10 so only a snapshot of these complex realities will be shared at this point. Regarding the challenges and opportunities, participants recalled that everyone was tired of the prevailing negative culture and pressure which created pervasive effects of tensions on pupils' learning outcomes (BT6, BP1). Thus, there was general yearning for something different; anything that could motivate a change of the situation.

This drive for change was, as headteacher BHT explained, the most revealing opportunity for the initiation of the LfL ideals. "They needed an approach that will motivate them, and I know that to achieve this the best strategy is to be open, exemplary, consultative, inclusive, and sensitive to their professional needs especially the teachers". Expressing their joy, the headteacher and various participants referred to shared meaning and beliefs, improved

commitment and capacities as positive changes that resulted from this collaborative approach of leading. As the circuit supervisor – BCS, who himself, a beneficiary of LfL workshops organised by the Ministry of Education said: “They now swim in mutual trust and care, inclusivity, security, transparency, fairness, regularity and punctuality. They believe that with everyone on board, they can achieve the school’s vision”.

In addition to positive changes in attitude exemplified in pupils’ renewed interest in learning and a growing teacher and parental commitment, the final embrace of inclusive education in the school was credited to the influence of the LfL ideals. This was particularly linked to the sub-principles of the second LfL principle, which emphasises inclusivity, all-round nurturing and appreciation of everyone and their unique gifts. Inclusive education, as teacher BT1, one of the resource teachers stated, means “making the school environment accessible and welcoming enough for everybody without any hindrance or discrimination irrespective of the person's physical and mental condition, and providing the best conditions for everyone to excel”. Accessibility includes not only welcoming the special needs children with care and love but also, making all the facilities available so that if the sighted were reading their textbooks, the visually-impaired could also read their embossed textbooks (BT1).

Many pupils, including BS3, BS4, and BS11 expressed joy and appreciation of having the VI learn with them in the same classroom despite the fact that pupils like BS10 felt some of the VI were rude. BS1 also drew my attention to the fact that the braille machines made distracting noises during lessons. The teachers and parents I spoke to were singing from the same hymn page as the pupils with most of them expressing the joy that segregation and cultural discrimination against the visually-impaired was over in the school and pupils were taking the good news to the larger society.

Personal observations of the visually-impaired at Wednesday morning worship in the school as well as other places revealed their giftedness. Perhaps, the most important example to buttress this point was that the main drummer at the national celebration of Ghana’s 60<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary was a VI pupil from this school. No wonder, the headteacher dialogued well beyond the walls of the school with other stakeholders to ensure that the VI pupils’ formal education did not end at the basic level but to assist them ascend the higher tiers of education. In crediting the LfL ideals for this feat, the confident BHT asserted: “There is no way this school would have survived as an inclusive school if not because of the insights from the LfL principles. The homely environment that you are seeing, and the creativity is inspired by the principles”.

Review of the kind of language stakeholders used during PTA and staff meetings evidently confirmed not only these claims but also teacher and pupil regularity to school when their attendance registers were analysed. My observations at the school also revealed high levels of attention to the learning activities, sharing of leadership, and accountability judging from the commitment, creativity and mutual trust. In fact, it was in this school the concept of non-positional leadership was first explicitly used by one of the teachers (BT6) to explain that one did not have to be in a formal leadership position to be able to lead.

These direct and indirect canonisations of the principles notwithstanding, the participants especially the headteacher and some teachers, acknowledged that enculturating the ideals of the LfL principles met with and continues to meet some challenges. A notable one, according to teacher BHT was the previously fierce resistance from parents of both the full-sighted and visually-impaired to the incorporation of the VI into the main stream classroom because of the cultural belief that they were cursed. But as the headteacher repeatedly reminded me, with unity of purpose, shared belief, respectful dialogue, and resilience, not only inclusive education that was possible but also the general success story of the LfL principles. Household poverty, illiteracy, a culture of non-accountability, and a lack of adequate support from the GES, among others, were cited by participants as challenges to the LfL story in the school. The circuit supervisor who was considered by the teachers as a critical friend of the school remarked that patient trust, regular evaluation and feedback helped the school to overcome some of them. Despite all these challenges, AHT remarked that “everybody knows something new has happened to this school and they appreciate it, and that is the LfL principles. We will do everything to deepen them and sustain them”.

## **Summary**

I explored in this chapter the intra-case processes, opportunities and challenges through which the LfL story developed in the two schools. Whereas school A incorporated the principles simultaneously, school B prioritised a creating conducive learning environment as the reference point for enculturating the rest of the principles. However, the headteachers of both schools resorted to a gradual exposure of the principles starting with the teachers and school management committees and then to pupils and parents. Collaboration and devolution of power was a strategy both heads adopted to get all stakeholders to embrace the principles. These processes of incorporating the LfL principles are considered in detail in the next four

chapters where cross-case analysis of the main converging and diverging processes are shared.

## **Chapter 7. Participants' perceptions about the Leadership for Learning principles**

### **Introduction**

In chapter 4, I explained that my objective was to gain insights into the processes of successful incorporation of the Leadership for Learning (LfL) principles in two basic schools in Ghana. The principles – focus on learning, creating a conducive environment for learning, creating a learning dialogue, and sharing leadership and accountability constituted the basis of the research questions (RQs). RQ1 sought the participants' understanding of the LfL principles; RQ2, the practice of the principles; RQ3 and RQ4; how existential factors promoted or inhibited the practice of the principles.

In this chapter, I present the findings relating to RQ1 in which headteachers, teachers and pupils were the main respondents. Although one-on-one semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and documentary analysis were deployed, the interviews and FGDs were used as the main data gathering instruments. The substance of the narrative represents what the participants shared and the only thing attributable to me is the interpreting and weaving of the participants' views into a clear, logical and readable narrative which avoids distorting the participants' views. The chapter is organised into five sections with each of the first four sections representing the participants' views about the key concepts which underpin the LfL principles – learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability. The fifth and final section represents what, collectively, the LfL principles meant to the participants. Before reporting the findings, it is important to clarify the underlying rationale for using these key concepts as entry points into the participants' perceptions about the principles.

### **Seeking perceptions about the LfL principles through underpinning key words**

The LfL principles themselves are essentially, interrelated. Thus, seeking a direct representative understanding of the principles would have been the ideal. However, such an approach would be unwise because experience from the trialling and interpretation of literature dealing with the principles showed that it is difficult to achieve any substantial information if they are explained as a consolidated whole. When I asked the headteacher during the trialling what the LfL principles meant to her, because of the difficulty in giving an overarching response, she simply responded to the question by addressing the principles individually implying it is the most pragmatic way forward.



However, seeking the participants' understanding of each LfL principle was also not as straight forward because the principles are configured in phrasal form with each preceded by transitive verbs – focus, create, and share. This nomenclature posed hermeneutic problems. For example, when the headteacher attempted to define 'focus on learning', she said: "Focus on learning was about concentrating on or making learning the core business of the school". This was a shallow response in which the verb 'focus' was simply replaced by 'concentrate' with nothing being said about 'learning'. Therefore, directly asking questions using the LfL principles could generate superficial and mechanical answers as well as undermine my intention to learn about the principles from the freely expressed understanding of the participants. It was important for me not to give any impression at all that I was evangelising about the principles rather than seeking to discover knowledge and understanding. Based on these considerations I sought the participants' understanding of the principles through the lens of learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability, which were already in familiar and daily usage in the schools.

An advantage that was quite related to using the key words was that it helped me capture data on the five principles without having to situate the appreciation of each answer by explaining all the principles in their fullness. Creating a conducive environment for learning, for example, was a principle but because I engaged the participants in deeper conversations on 'learning' it was possible to elicit what created an environment that promoted learning. Similarly, dialogue, leadership and accountability were used as key words in discussions with participants. Therefore, the findings re participants' perceptions about the LfL principles were extrapolated from the in-depth sharing of their understanding of these words. I emphasise that the way participants understood the principles was not only an important prelude but a crucial part of understanding the processes because it was the way participants understood the principles that determined the way they practised them.

### **Learning and focus on learning as participants understand them**

Analysis of the one-on-one interviews with headteachers, teachers and pupils, and the FGDs with teachers and pupils revealed enriching insights which illuminated learning in terms of its meanings – definitions, importance, scope, and characteristics.

## **Participants' dissection of learning**

### *Learning as a progressive activity*

Views from most of the participants portrayed learning as a daily progressive life-long activity that brings a permanent positive change in behaviour or attitude. It involves movement from the known to the unknown to bring about attitudinal change (BHT). It starts from the known, as headteacher BHT elucidated, because no one is tabula rasa, but at the same time life is dynamic, and society a complex living organism often leaving so much to discover. Thus, as pupil AS4 remarked: "Learning involves discovering the unknown and no human being escapes learning". Views of some teachers (AT2, AT6, BT6) resonated with this conception of learning. However, AT2, a male teacher with eight years teaching experience in school A said that learning was not just an activity but a progressive activity. Qualifying learning as a progressive activity was necessary but not sufficient according to teachers AT6 and BT6. They felt the meaning of learning could only be sufficiently revealed by adding 'permanent' (BT6) and 'positive' (AT6) to the definition so that learning is linked to a progressive activity that causes positive permanent change.

Most of the pupil interviewees understood learning as an activity that was directly linked to the achievement of their future goals. The visually-impaired pupil – BS8 stated: "Learning is an activity which involves studying, repeating, searching, researching, asking questions, observing, and interacting to gain knowledge and skills to achieve our future aspirations". This shared understanding of learning as an 'activity', was from the views of thirty eight of the 43 interviewees – headteachers, teachers and pupils.

However, pupils (AS2, BS6) and teachers (AT1, AT4) shared a view that emphasised learning as a process rather than activity that enables people to gain knowledge (BS6) or ideas and experiences which refine them to do things differently, more efficiently and profitably (AT1). But, the Basic Nine boy, BS1 thinks learning is a method because it involves using different approaches including studying, observation, listening and questioning to gain theoretical and practical knowledge.

When synoptically scrutinised, I realised that these different focal points of defining learning basically portrayed it as a dynamic urge to gain knowledge that would make better, happier and contented people, and a positively changed society. The definitions predominantly emanated from the interviews, and seemed at a glance, to be sufficiently representative of the participants' individual perception of learning.

However, gaining a more shared meaning of learning from the teachers and pupils' FGDs helped to not only reinforce the reliability of the individually derived definitions but showed how they practised learning. In the context of the FGDs, the common view confirmed learning as a progressive activity, making it the participants' shared understanding of learning. The definition of learning provided a valuable entry point into the vast world of learning itself, which enabled me to explore its importance and characteristics for a more holistic appreciation.

### **Importance and characteristics of learning**

#### *Importance*

Analysis of the interviews and FGDs revealed that for all the participants learning was the core business of the schools and a key aspect of their lives. During the one-on-one interviews, I wanted to know from the pupils their motivation for leaving home very early, often on an empty stomach, to walk several miles to school in order to arrive on time. Given the hierarchical nature of Ghanaian society with its concomitant power differentials between parents and children, school authorities and pupils, I was expecting prudential reasons including fear of punishment to be cited. However, most of the pupils cited their desire for learning and love for their school as the propelling inspiration for their regularity and punctuality. During the FGDs and this was to verify the authenticity of this response, I re-phrased the question: 'At this stage of your life, what do you count as the most important thing and why?' There was resonance among the discussants that learning was the most important thing in their life with some emphasising that no learning, no bright future. One of the female discussants, AS7 was emphatic that learning was the only and best key to unlock success and fulfilment in life. Another one concurred: "For me, learning is key to life because without it I cannot achieve my goals; will be a burden on society, my parents and myself but when I learn, I become an asset" (BS10).

At different times during the individual interviews, and the FGDs, the headteachers (only during the interviews) and all the teachers (at both fora) expressed views which not only converged with but also substantiated those of the pupils. One of the resource teachers, BT2's view that "learning leads us to intellectual, moral and economic independence or self-reliance; improves and liberates us as individuals and society" summed up the views of the pupils, headteachers and his colleagues on the importance of learning. But who learns, where and how? I think the characteristics of learning can address these questions.

### *Characteristics*

Responses from the participants revealed that characteristically, no human being escapes learning. AT9, a male teacher with 26 years of teaching and learning experience said one characteristic of learning was that every human being experiences it. Concurring with the teacher, one of the Basic Nine girls (BS1) remarked: “No one in this world knows everything; if you encounter the natural environment and other people, you realise you know very little and need to learn more”. In the context of the case study schools, the two headteachers shared that “unless we unlearn our old-held ideas, we could remain at the back of the queue of this dynamic life” (BHT), but “once people are ready to unlearn and learn always, they stand the opportunities to have their socio-cognitive and psychomotor capacities enhanced” (AHT).

The common view that learning includes everybody was further enriched by most of the teachers and the pupils who stated that it also included gaining knowledge and enlightenment from everywhere and everything. “We must not only learn from everyone but from everything, and everywhere. I tell my pupils to learn from out there including the sign posts, advertisement boards, inscriptions on buildings, symbols, people’s behaviour and the natural environment” (AT4). All the pupils confirmed this claim with some of them sharing their experiences on how they learnt by picking vocabularies from advertisement boards, televisions and the radio airwaves.

Analysis of the interviews and focus group discussions also revealed that learning was inseparable from teaching. “It would be incomplete to talk about learning without teaching” (AT3). Both realities seemed to be mutually nourishing and comfortable partners because as teacher AT1 asserts: “As a teacher you either go to the classroom to teach the pupils to learn or to cheat them”. When I probed AT1 to clarify this claim, he said:

When we teachers come to school or go into the classrooms with the mindset that we know everything and ours is to coach the pupils to pass standardised examinations, we are cheating the pupils, ourselves, and the nation. We can only teach to learn and learn to teach, and this happens when there is a mutual appreciation of experiences that inspire the curiosity of teachers and pupils to learn, grapple with issues and ask challenging questions.

The issue of learning for life and not for examinations was discussed during the teachers’ FGDs and most of the teachers subscribed to the idea of learning for life because it was the best way to prepare pupils – their heads, hearts and hands for life (AT9). Although this stance was very much appreciated by all the teachers, BT7 argued that because the current criterion for measuring a successful school was based on its pupils’ performance in the basic education

certificate examination – BECE, it was difficult to ensure a balance between learning for life and for examinations.

A further characteristic of learning that was already nuanced pointed to the question: how do we learn? To this question, teacher AT1 remarked that learning entailed “... grappling with and assessing issues, making connections to personal experiences for enlightenment, understanding and finding solutions”. Views of some of the pupils (AS3, BS9) corroborated this submission during the individual interviews and FGDs but AS5 added that constant searching and researching and taking cues from other people were part of the characteristics of learning. Sharing a similar view, BS10 emphasised that “in learning you have to observe and emulate other people’s experiences especially your role models like the teachers, seniors, parents, so that you can know more about how they struggled in life but made it later”. However, BS4, a fellow discussant believed “observing and learning from others should not be limited to only role models but even people who have messed up their lives to encourage us to learn harder, be determined and morally upright”. Drawing from the participants’ perception of learning, it makes logical sense to assume that learning receives rightful and primary attention by the participants. But what does it really mean to focus on learning?

### **Focus on learning as everyone owning and prioritising learning**

What I present as the participants’ understanding of ‘focus on learning’ are extrapolations from their perspectives on learning. While I looked very much for enriching insights from the participants’ views, the basic measuring rod for what qualified for inclusion or exclusion from the clarification of focus on learning was based on the characteristics of the LfL principles elucidated in chapter three. I strove to collate views which could give a substantial clarification and direct definition of focus on learning.

Analysis of the interview and focus groups data showed that the headteachers, and some of the teachers and pupils sometimes explicitly used the phrases ‘focus on learning’, ‘concentrate on learning’ or ‘pay attention to learning’. All these phrases were used in participants’ responses to questions I asked to discover their perspectives on the meaning of learning, how they practised it, and the factors which promoted or inhibited learning. Concerning how the school promoted the culture of learning, BT6 – school B’s assistant headteacher said: “We tell the children every day that we know they are from difficult backgrounds, but they can do it; they can make it in life if they focus on their learning all the time”. Probing the teacher to clarify what she meant by ‘if they focus on their learning’ she

emphasised that “it is all about owning their learning, making it a priority by dedicating time to it during and after school hours”.

However, one of the male teachers (BT1) reiterated an egalitarian and comprehensive view that served as a reminder that focus on learning was all about the readiness of everyone to make the effort to improve as individuals and as a school. Focus on learning was also described as consciousness and openness to growth or change, an insight that was expressed by two of the Basic Six pupils (AS8, BS4). “To concentrate on learning, is all about growth mindset and sharing” (AS8).

Sharing his thoughts, the AHT emphasised that “fundamentally, learning is learning and we all must focus on it. However, the processes are very much shaped by our individual backgrounds, personalities, beliefs, experiences, and understanding of the importance of learning”. The idea of belief inspired a question I posed to pupil BS1 who lived seven miles away from the school: ‘Considering that you live really far from the school, what does it entail to keep up with your learning?’ She said: “If I want to wait to get to school or home to learn, I cannot make the best of my learning, so I learn everywhere, at the bus stop, and in the vehicles that I board to school”. These extrapolations of focus on learning were traceable to the individual interviews but the FGDs also provided a discursive space to estimate a general view on the meaning of focus on learning.

Capitalising on the confidence pupils from both schools placed on learning as the key to their success in life, I posed the following question for discussion: ‘If learning is so key to your success in life, whose role mattered the most with regards to your learning?’ Responses to this question revealed that the roles of parents, teachers, and the pupils were crucial to pupils’ learning with some of them placing the roles on an equal level of importance, and others prioritising the roles of parents, teachers, and pupils. BS7, a proponent of tri-equal co-agency of roles remarked:

I think the roles of the three are equally important because the parents will teach you what is good and bad and pay the school fees for you to go to school. The teachers will teach you in school for you to know a lot of things, and the pupils will have to listen carefully or pay attention to what the teachers teach.

Pupils who prioritised parental agency in relation to their learning cited parental care.

“Whether the teacher teaches you or not, or you learn or not, lack of parental control or care will make it difficult for you to learn. You need your parents to encourage or monitor you to learn” (AS5). In supporting his fellow pupil, AS2 said: “When you bring your homework,

and even if your parents are illiterates, they will say go and do your homework or go and bring it and let me see. That is extremely important for our learning”.

However, AS1, AS8 and BS3 argued that teachers were most important because they spent more time with them in the teaching and learning contexts and were even playing the role of parents. It should be stressed here that the word teacher was used generically to include the headteachers. In justifying the utmost importance of teachers, AS1 first refuted his fellow pupils by positing that “what you are saying is what is supposed to be done by parents but in this school, teachers are doing the work of most of the parents providing pupils with food, pencils, books, bags, and erasers”. He then stressed: “The teachers spend at least eight hours with us every day and sometimes at the weekends to teach us. Some even visit our homes to encourage us and our parents” (AS1). As parent AP2, whose submission resonated with the opinion of most other parents asserted: “You can’t take it from teachers; they are the most important if you consider the pupils’ learning”. These two stances clearly connected focus on learning to the agency of parents and teachers as providers, encouragers and mentors of learning. Therefore, focus on learning could be understood as being directly proportional to the faithful commitment of parents and teachers to the business of learning.

These views notwithstanding, as the discussions got deeper, most of the discussants favoured the idea that linked focus on learning to pupils since they are the primary owners of their lives and learning. They argued that it was the pupils’ positive motivation that kept them close to learning. From these elucidations, one way I gauged participants’ perception of focus on learning was to equate it to the idea of owning and prioritising learning by stakeholders.

### **Dialogue and a learning dialogue through the participants’ lens**

Unlike learning, where transcripts from interviews and focus group discussions formed the sole sources for analysis, in the case of dialogue the observation and minutes of PTA and staff meetings data served as additional sources. Triangulating this additional data with perspectives emerging from the interviews and FGDs enabled better meaning – definition, characteristics, dimensions, spaces and the importance of dialogue to emerge.

#### **Participants’ definition of dialogue**

Synoptically mapping views from the headteachers, teachers and pupils of the two study schools showed that the most convergent view of dialogue was that it was an effective communication or conversation that is followed by action on issues to improve the life of a

school and its members. In the words of most of the teachers, the pupils and the headteachers (ATH & BHT), dialogue entailed democracy and mutual sharing of ideas. As BHT expressed:

Dialogue is where we share ideas with the hope that together we can arrive at a decision that will help the school to achieve its vision. It is about being democratic. If you are autocratic, people will be afraid and will not share their views.

When I sought clarification on who was meant by ‘we’, the response connected it to the headteacher, teachers, pupils, parents, and all stakeholders of the school. This implied that the experiences and common good of stakeholders were the life force of dialogue. Thus, it made sense when teachers AT6 and BT2 averred that dialogue was about the common good. Common good, a recurring theme in the conversations around dialogue, leadership and accountability was connected to the idea of the welfare of all or the achievement of the schools’ visions. It was clear from the analysis of the interviews and FGDs that more could be learnt about dialogue by considering its dimensions, characteristics, and importance.

### **Characteristics, dimensions, spaces and importance of dialogue**

#### *Characteristics*

Dialogue was perceived as being a relational dynamic which embeds learning because “it takes at least two people to [have a] dialogue – to interact and share ideas, discuss issues, listen and understand each other. If dialogue is effective, it begets cordial relationships which enable everyone to learn something” (BT1). This view re-echoed an assertion by one of the Basic Nine pupils, that, “wherever there are people, there is interaction, and wherever there is interaction, there is learning” (AS10).

Crucial to dialogue was the belief by some participants that divergences of views were always going to be part of dialogue and so, good demeanour, trust, confidentiality, personal knowledge, and empathy were important characteristics of dialogue in the school (AHT, BS12 & BT4). Teacher AT7’s view that “the success or failure of a dialogue depends on the tone people use” resonated with the idea of good demeanour but she added “freedom of interaction, mutual listening and respect for competence and personal experiences are essential aspects of dialogue”.

Personal observations during interactions within the schools and analysis of minutes of PTA and staff meetings suggested that linguistic and affective sensitivity was a key



characteristic of dialogue. As a daily participant in, and observer of, the leading, teaching and learning dynamics of the researched schools, I was repeatedly struck by the culture of polite language during interactions. It was commonplace especially in school B, irrespective of age or gender or status, to hear conversation characterised by use of ‘please’, ‘I am sorry’, ‘I understand your struggles’, ‘thank you for your insight’, ‘you are late today, is everything okay?’ These experiences confirmed a general opinion frequently expressed by the research participants that dialogue was the approach that guided every activity in the school.

### *Dimensions, spaces, and importance*

Analysis of the interviews revealed that as a relational dynamic, dialogue had lateral and vertical dimensions. Lateral dialogue is a conversation between co-equals, for example, two teachers whereas vertical dialogue involves a conversation between a subordinate say a teacher and a higher authority such as a circuit supervisor (AT1). The AHT also underscored that “whether the dialogue is vertical or horizontal, it must be professional; it must focus on the main activities of the school...”.

It was in harmony with this elaboration that the idea of spaces of dialogue was nuanced by some of the participants. In the words of teacher BT7, who had been a resource teacher for twenty-two years, “school-wide, classrooms, staff common rooms, staff meetings, school-based in-service training (NSET), and school-others including PTA meetings, are spaces of dialogue. I should add pupils’ home which we visit because there we dialogue with them and their parents”. Evidence from the classroom observation data showed good dialogic engagement between teachers and pupils in more than three quarters of the lessons I observed.

As shown in the definition, dialogue is not a purposeless conversation but one which aims at the common good. From the pupils’ perspective, dialogue constituted the life force of their learning because it was the means through which they interacted, discussed, and shared ideas especially in the context of doing and presenting group projects in class (AS8, BS6). Given its link to effective communication, stakeholders (AHT, AS5, BT4) revealed that dialogue was a great medium for clarifying positions or views, reconciling and healing, and empowering people because their views were respected. There were also views from teachers (AT6, BT6) that decisions which were taken based on dialogue were easily and collectively owned. Thus, dialogue was important not only in providing the inviting spaces for leading, teaching and learning, but for everyone to know and own decisions about the school’s life.

These conceptualisations of dialogue emanated mainly from the individual participant interviews so FGDs were used to triangulate the evidence. Of interest to me was any evidence of a relationship between dialogue and learning and any hints from among the participants which could clarify dialogue as a learning-oriented dynamic. Bearing in mind that dialogue was used by the participants synonymously with interpersonal relationships and/or conversations, I asked: 'If you were to choose between interpersonal relationships and availability of facilities, which of these would you prioritise as the most important in terms of its link to learning, and why?' Analysis of the FGDs' data pointed to the understanding that both were crucial to learning but the majority, twelve of the 16 discussants, argued that interpersonal relationships by their very nature embedded learning more than mere availability of facilities. Arguments which were advanced to buttress the above position portrayed a learning dialogue as a relationship for learning.

### **Learning dialogue as relationship for learning**

Arguments put forward by two teachers and two pupils prioritised the link between availability of physical facilities and learning. Liking the role of physical facilities to that of the 'Big Brother' of learning, one of the teachers, AT1, argued that most of the pupils came from homes without toilets or computers so a school equipped with these facilities automatically tunes them into a learning mode.

However, 75 per cent of the discussants prioritised interpersonal relationships, arguing that their very essence embedded learning and, when cordial, provided a conducive environment for learning. Anchoring their arguments on existential realities of family challenges, the role of dialogue in bonding stakeholders, and securing, utilising and sustaining physical facilities, they concluded that dialogue was about relationships for learning.

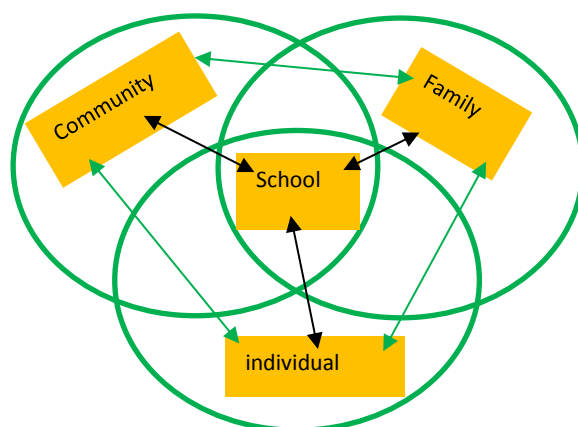
Going into the specific fruits of dialogue and how they linked to learning, some teachers and pupils were of the view that cordial interpersonal relationships were at the basis of the emergence of certain learning activities. Using the classroom context, teacher BT6 remarked that based on her 30-year teaching experiences, cordial interpersonal relationships were crucial for gaining pupils' trust, love for learning, and active participation. Pupils and teachers from both schools were in complete agreement with the above claims. Evidence from pupils (AS8, BS7), and PTA and staff meetings which I reviewed showed that whenever cordial relationships characterised the schools and classrooms, learning conversations abounded. But, as some pupils like AS7 and BS10, and teachers AT2 and BT1 stated there

still were some people who did not subscribe to dialogue as a *modus operandi*. My experiences in observing some lessons resonated with this reality. I was surprised when in one of the Basic Six English lessons, the teacher directed the following comments at a pupil after he expressed a contrary opinion: ‘Sit down! What do you know? What experience do you have?’ This kind of attitude was uncommon, but the inconvenient reality was that not everyone was a dialogist, especially in micro contexts of power differentials. While it was true that pockets of cases of non-dialogic behaviour existed in the schools, an idea emerged that the basis of a new conceptualisation of a school was attributable to dialogue.

### **Learning dialogue and school as ‘heart’ of individual, family and community**

Linking dialogue to a new conception of a school was expressed by the two headteachers, teachers and parents during the individual interviews. It was the BHT who, when sharing her understanding of the LfL principles explicitly expressed the strong link between the individual person, family and community, and claimed school was the heart of these aspects. This view was echoed by some parents with one of them saying: “Gone are the days when school was there, home here, and community there. Now, we are all part of the school so we collaborate through dialogue” (BP4).

In reflecting on the metaphor of the school as the heart of the individual person, family and community, I graphically illustrated the following new and old conceptions of a school (figures 7.1 & 7.2 below) to make these conceptualisations visibly appreciated.

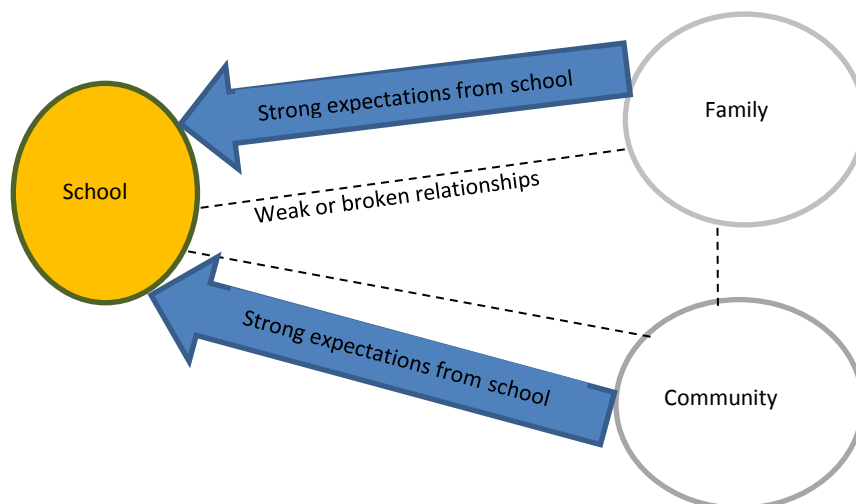


**Figure 7.1 The new conception of a school**

In figure 7.1 above the overlapping of the circles in which individual persons, families and communities are contained signifies that these are intricately linked. At the centre of them is the school, a melting point where experiences of these three dimensions are refined using the learning of pupils as a reference point for the common good of the system. The green colour

symbolises hope and richness in each context and the gold rectangular boxes show that the individual, family and community are repositories of precious gold for the improvement of the individual, school and system. The doubled-ended arrows point to the mutuality of interaction or relationality among these different contexts.

Figure 7.2 below is the opposite where the grey circles containing family and community show that they have nothing to give as far as school improvement, and especially pupils' learning, is concerned. It is the school only that is the rich deposit of all that it takes to satisfy the expectations of all, hence the gold colour. As can be seen in the diagram, the school, family and community have weak relationships represented by the broken lines but the family and community have very strong one-way expectations from the school as the thick one-ended blue arrows show. The individual person is missing in this simplistic conception of a school compared to the new conception above.



**Figure 7.2 The old conception of a school**

The ideas participants shared about dialogue linked it to effective communication in which headteachers, teachers, pupils and other stakeholders guided their interactions and conversations with good demeanour, affective sensitivity and appreciation for competence, and diversity of experiences. Through dialogue, stakeholders learn a great deal academically, socially and affectively and these dynamics by default present dialogue as essentially a relationship for learning. Broadly speaking, the dialogic umbrella covered not only learning but also the leadership life of the school. In the next section what the participants know about leadership is explored with the hope of gaining a specific understanding of what it means to share leadership.

## **Leadership and what sharing it means for the participants**

Views emerging from the analysis of the interviews and FGDs showed that most of the participants perceived leadership as a position of trust for service to the common good. Unlike learning and dialogue, participants also dissected the concept of leadership through metaphors.

### **Leadership as a position of trust**

Used interchangeably and variously by the participants during the interviews, leadership was defined as either a position of trust or an entrusted position through which people influence each other to achieve the vision of the school. In analysing the definition, I was convinced that the phrases ‘position of trust’ and ‘to influence’ were quite significant but vague. Thus, I embraced the FGDs spaces for discourse on these phrases. Taking advantage of a remark by one of the teachers during the interviews that leadership was a position of trust and not a possession, I echoed this claim for the teachers to discuss.

All of them maintained that leadership was a position of trust because it was basically a shared responsibility to be fulfilled for the common good. This view hints at the idea that when leadership was perceived as a position of trust, there was room for everyone to lead because it was about sharing responsibility. That means that headteachers, teachers, and pupils all play their roles as appropriate to them. In line with this belief, BT6 asserted that “when we talk of leadership as an entrusted position, the focus is on doing the work using what you and others possess to achieve the common good for all”. She however argued that because people must combine talents for leadership to achieve its goal, it was only appropriate to perceive it as both a position of trust and a possession.

Using the idea of everyone being a leader as another lens, she furthered her argument that “I think that is why in this school, we consider everyone as a leader even when teachers and pupils are not in formal positions. It is because the gift of leadership is intrinsically part of everyone”. A similar view was expressed in the teachers’ FGDs of school A by teacher AT9. However, a colleague, AT2, diverged arguing that “I think we all possess leadership qualities but occupying a leadership position is by election or appointment”, a view which was upheld by another teacher BT5 and pupil AS7.

As can be seen from the above, perceiving leadership as a position of trust was a reality that converged the views of all the participants. But linking leadership to possession, appointment or election as a necessary condition to access it constituted a source of divergence. During the teachers FGDs, BT6 asked: “If we can’t talk of the talents we possess

as the basis for being leaders, what is it that makes everyone a leader?”

Views of those on the other side of the argument showed an appreciation that the unique talents of everyone were key to leadership. Nonetheless, because of the human tendency to abuse, as current political leadership experiences in Africa attested, it was more appropriate and beneficial to understand leadership as an activity which people bring their talents to rather than see it as a possession (AT1, BT8). This was a position shared by the headteachers and most of the teachers from both schools. Revelations from the pupils’ FGDs corroborated the view that leadership was a position for service with some of them emphasising competence, experience and good communication as crucial aspects of leadership (AS6, BS12).

This notwithstanding, pupils AS7, AS12 and BS9, who held the idea that only those appointed or elected to leadership positions are leaders, said the headteacher, assistant headteacher and the prefects were the leaders. In rebuttal, those who argued that everyone was a leader relied on three realities to buttress their points: experiences in school, family, and the biblical story of creation. A Basic Nine girl – AS6, argued that “everyone is a leader because in the school we all influence each other: everyone encourages, advises friends, shares ideas, teaches colleagues or juniors. If two people teach each other something, it means we are sharing leadership”.

As stated in this quote, leadership was once again linked to influence so what does it really mean to influence? To this question, Teacher AT2 said that ‘to influence’ connoted a two-pronged idea of collaboration and exemplarity of service. Other teachers mentioned in one way or the other the exemplary leadership styles of their headteachers - concretely expressed in their readiness to share leadership roles and be the first to practise what they preached, as ways they could explain what it meant to influence others. “In this school, the philosophy behind influencing others is simple: the headteacher preaches about mutual appreciation of talents, regularity, punctuality, transparency, firmness and fairness, and practises them. You cannot fail to be influenced” (AT7). In school B, teachers (BT1, BT5) and pupils (BS8, BS10) described the headteacher as being so transparent and selfless and led every moment by example: “Unless your conscience is dead, you can’t afford not to be influenced by the good example of this woman” (BT1). The headteachers themselves concurred that if there were any secrets to improvements in the schools, it was because of their availability, exemplarity and readiness to get everyone on board.

Quite interestingly, the pupils not only gave ideas to clarify what influence stood for in their view but insightfully qualified influence with the adjective ‘positive’. Most of the pupils

who participated in the interviews and FGDs mentioned that they were all leaders but it was the exemplary leadership styles of their headteachers and teachers which positively influenced them to see themselves as leaders.

The foregoing submissions represented in a more substantial way the participants' understanding of leadership as a position of trust: a relational collaborative activity which drives others to achieve a common goal through coordination and supervision of talents. But this was just a part of the bigger picture of the richness of leadership. As each of the participants – headteachers, teachers and pupils strove to help me to better understand their perceptions of leadership during the individual interviews, some of them employed metaphors to do so, for example, leadership as a golf club.

### **Leadership metaphor and characteristics**

#### *Leadership as a golf club*

The metaphor of leadership as a golf club emerged from the ingenuity of teacher AT1 when I asked him to share his understanding of leadership. He said: “In fact, in this school especially from our headteacher's way of leading, I see leadership as a golf club”. He clarified the metaphor quite considerably as did his colleagues in the FGDs by comparing a golf course and school to bring out their joint defining features. Teachers said that like schools which are primarily homes for teaching and learning, golf courses are spaces for sports, socialisation and leisure. Just as headteachers, teachers, and pupils utilise the different physical, social and emotional realities as opportunities and challenges to promote learning, so golfers use golf courses which have beautiful green fields, holes, and roads as well as hazards. These hazards and physical characteristics served as both opportunities and challenges which the golfers must overcome with their sports equipment and skills to enjoy their golf. Focusing on the golfer, the clubs, balls and holes, AT1 explained that getting the ball into the hole was the aim of the golfer just as getting teachers to teach well and pupils to excel in their learning was the aim of the headteacher.

In a concrete hermeneutical sense, AT1 said that the metaphor portrayed leadership as an activity that was contextually sensitive. A further interpretation came from teacher BT3 who believed that the metaphor depicted leadership as dynamic activity involving guiding and directing others. Thus, the metaphor implied that leadership is a dynamic activity the different styles of which must be deployed as and when appropriate (AT6). For BT7 the metaphor showed that leadership was about appreciation or celebration of everyone's talents and role. Relying on these submissions about leadership, what does sharing leadership mean?

### **What sharing leadership means**

It was interesting to realise that most of the participants perceived leadership as an activity, which by its essence was unavoidably relational, shared, and part of everyone's life. The following words of the BHT capture the views of the other participants that link leadership to division of labour based on expertise or talents.

Let me make this clear that when I say I share leadership responsibilities in the school, it does not mean that I have all the power and give bits and pieces to others to do for me. No. It is not like that. We distribute the responsibilities based on the talents, expertise and experiences people have, to help achieve the school's vision. They have the freedom to lead and be creative. I don't interfere. I only make sure they are accountable for their decisions.

My five-month daily observations in the schools confirmed that leadership really was shared based on talents, experience and availability. At various fora in the schools, I observed stakeholders take initiatives. This will be considered in detail in the next chapter. Most of the pupils believed that sharing leadership was coterminous with giving mutual support academically. The practical relevance of this claim was confirmed by the ubiquity of pupils' grouping to share ideas. Based on these findings it could be said that, according to the participants, to share leadership was about division of labour based on expertise, talents, availability and freedom to be creative.

### **Accountability and what sharing it means**

Revelations from the interview data showed participants had an interrelated two-pronged understanding of accountability, linking it either with fidelity to stewardship or availability to mutual stocktaking.

#### **Dissecting accountability: definitions**

##### *Accountability as fidelity to stewardship for the common good*

There was a common view among the headteachers and teachers that accountability was about faithful commitment to stewardship. In the words of teacher AT3 which best captured this view, "accountability is about responsible and honest stewardship for the common good". When I probed her to unpack stewardship, she linked it to the mandate of the various stakeholders especially headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents in relation to leading, teaching, and learning. As can be appreciated from the above claim, the idea of the common good was the telos of accountability and of leadership. It also was linked to the schools'



progress or improvement. From this lens, teacher AT6 claimed that once all the stakeholders help pupils to grow holistically, it means the common good has been achieved. A more comprehensive view about the common good came from the BHT who linked it to positive changes in almost every stakeholder. She described it as the desired change exemplified in pupils' holistic development, and improvement in teachers, parents, or communities' attitude towards the welfare of everyone.

An insight that further clarified accountability as stewardship came from teachers AT1 and BT6 who emphasised that respect for rules of the teaching profession and judicious use of time were part of accountable stewardship. In the words of BT6 accountability was a daily affair because of its connection to every responsibility. Like their mentors, most of the pupils agreed that teachers and parents play a crucial supporting role but reiterated that they were the primary owners of their learning. For the pupils, accountability was about justice or fairness in relation to being truthful to their learning.

From the headteachers' perspective, accountability was about being responsible as individuals and to the work, emphasising that transparent self- and system-evaluations were the life force of accountability. As BHT averred: "As a headteacher, I see my accountability as being exemplary, running an open and honest administration". Looking at these different statements, I realised that accountability was predominantly perceived by the participants as a daily reality linked to their individual responsibilities as leaders, teachers and learners. But another way the participants understood accountability was that it was a practice of self-availability for mutual stocktaking.

#### *Accountability as a practice of availing the self for mutual stocktaking*

Closely related to fidelity to stewardship was a recurring view among the participants that accountability was a practice of mutual stocktaking. "Accountability is a practice of availing yourself or allowing others access to your responsibilities, both financial and non-financial for evaluation or assessment for improvement of the school. It is about mutual stocktaking based on trust" (AHT). Thus, accountability is an exercise of giving and receiving supportive feedback on entrusted responsibilities to improve the school and to sustain the improvements (BT2). Given that these meaning-laden phrases including 'mutual stocktaking', 'entrusted responsibilities', 'supportive feedback' and 'sustain improvements' were used by many participants, it was only apt that I sought deeper insights for clearer and holistic understanding. At appropriate moments during the individual interviews, participants who mentioned any of the above phrases were asked to substantiate them. Sharing her insights,

teacher AT7 explained that her entrusted task was teaching and sometimes when pupils did not understand a topic, she took stock of the method used or the possible causes. If it emerged that the problem was the method, she changed it or brought in a colleague to handle the topic. Then at an appropriate time: “We sit down as staff to evaluate each department and individual subjects to identify successes and failures and the causes” (AT7).

Most of AT7’s colleagues concurred with her but some added that entrusted responsibility was linked more to an officially assigned duty whose manner of execution bore consequences since it was the only way people would be accountable.

The government pays us to teach so we must meet our side of the contract.

The children are entrusted to us by their parents so we must ensure their safety and help them to learn. Government provides classrooms, we teach and parents provide the children’s needs so they have to learn; it is their entrusted responsibility (BT8).

In other words, as one of the Basic Nine female pupils’ (BS3) explained: “Everyone – headteachers, teachers, pupils, parents, government, community, and the media must be accountable because whatever we do, it affects others”.

Elaborating on the idea of stocktaking, the BHT explained that, “stocktaking is about everyone freely sharing experiences from their work. Any good things to share? Any challenges? What could be the causes of the improvements and how do we sustain them? Any causes of the problem? Any way forward?” Embedded in these definitions of accountability as honest faithfulness to discharge of entrusted duties and availability for mutual stocktaking of such duties were purposes, characteristics, types, and spaces of accountability, which enriched the understanding of accountability.

### **Purposes, characteristics, types, and spaces of accountability**

#### *Purposes of accountability*

The common good, improvement of professional and school life, ensuring pupils’ growth, mutual confidence or collective efficacy, internal resilience, and support and sustainability were credited to accountability. According to teacher AT8:

Accountability covers every aspect of the life of the school and holds it together. It is the source of trust, unity and cooperation in the school.

Accountability is what makes parents and the PTA appreciate our efforts and collaborate with the school (AT8).

For pupil AS11, a Basic Nine boy, “accountability is the best way to let people know what is happening, what you are doing and how you are doing a task. Like our headteacher; when he receives books, he tells the whole school”. One of the teachers stressed that mutual accountability in the school created transparency, good knowledge of the school, inspired hard work, and good feeling among teachers (AT6). Thus, “it is out of the accounting [sic.] process that we cope with the challenges we encounter as school and teachers” (BT3). Therefore, being accountable served the purposes of keeping everyone abreast and resilient.

#### *Dimensions and characteristics of accountability*

It was the AHT who talked about lateral and vertical dimensions of accountability, where the lateral dimension was between peers and the vertical between people with power differentials. However, teacher BT6 talked about moral and professional accountability, linking moral accountability to the good example people leave for others, and professional accountability to fidelity to work and availability for mutual stocktaking. Regarding its defining characteristics, the stakeholders especially headteacher AHT said that “accountability is a relational tool because it is always in relation to someone or a task which affects others” (AHT). The professionally and morally relational character of accountability may have constituted the basis for the concordance among participants that accountability covered every aspect of the life of the school. As participants remarked: “accountability is anchored on honest familiarity and interest in the other” (BT7), “trust” (AT6); “fairness or justice” (BS6); “transparency and truthfulness” (BHT); and as BT1 asserted: “You can’t help anyone to understand accountability if evaluation, resilience, improvement and sustainability are lacking”.

#### *Agents and spaces of accountability*

I use the term ‘agents’ to denote the stakeholders who must do stocktaking of their stewardship because of its direct consequences for pupils’ learning. I use ‘spaces’ to refer to the professional and moral milieu within which the professional and moral stewardships are expressed. This idea of agents and spaces of accountability was inspired by the following lamentation:

Everything is reduced to the school. Parents want schools to be accountable but they don't think they should be accountable. GES holds schools accountable, communities hold schools accountable, the media hold schools accountable but they do not believe they should be accountable to the schools,

and by school, I mean the headteachers, teachers and pupils (BT6).

As BT6 and her colleagues noted, if quality education were to be achieved, all stakeholders must be accountable.

When I asked teachers of both schools during the FGDs for insights on how parents, communities, media and the government were agents as well as spaces of accountability, most of the views revolved around the professional roles and privileged positions of these stakeholders. One of school B's male teachers (BT2) queried: "Is it the teacher's duty to follow the children after school to their homes to ensure they learn?" Another one asked: "Is it our job to keep the children at home and away from watching telenovelas meant for married couples?" (AT7) It was at this point that most teachers turned the heat on parents, community and media arguing that parents were supposed to give account of their parenting or stewardship to their children through the role they play. Teacher AT9 remarked that parents must be accountable to the pupils, teachers and in fact, society because what goes on in every home is played out in the larger society. Buttressing AT9's point, some teachers underscored that the communities must be accountable to the schools by providing safety for the pupils, encouraging them, and protecting the schools (AT3, BT4). Turning to the media, teacher AT1 lamented that despite their privileged role as a mirror of society that should give feedback highlighting the good points and the weaknesses of society, the media were selfish, insensitive, pharisaically hypocritical, always putting the blame on others. AT1 added: "Ghanaians must demand from the Ministry of Education, accountability by calling on it to stop formulating and implementing policies based on partisan politics".

The pupils including AS1, AS5, BS8 and BS10 shared a similar view when during the interviews and FGDs they attributed challenges to their learning to the irresponsibility or insensitivity of the media, their communities and some parents. This issue will be elaborated in chapter 10.

### **What sharing accountability means**

The understanding of accountability as fidelity to stewardship, and self-availing for mutual stocktaking could equally be considered as the ways in which sharing accountability was understood by the participants. In other words, a faithful commitment to the duty of leading, teaching, learning, and parenting denoted sharing of accountability. Given that accountability is linked to activities which are about the common good, the participants' views clearly showed that when stakeholders availed themselves of their responsibilities for mutual stocktaking and accepted feedback for improvement, they were sharing

accountability. Up to this point, through conversations about learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability, I have teased out the participants' understanding of the Leadership for Learning principles. In the next section, I share what the principles denote when taken together.

### **The LfL principles: participants' holistic view**

As I clarified at the beginning of this chapter, and indeed, demonstrated throughout, I relied on the participants' comprehensive views about learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability to gauge what the LfL principles meant for them. In this sub-section, my goal is to share what could be called the participants' global view of the principles in which the emphasis is on the collective rather than the individual principles. To this end, two techniques proved valuable: first, presentation of responses from the two headteachers who at the beginning or end of the interviews were asked to share their general views about the principles. Second, I tried to identify views on the individual principles with which I could string the rest of the perceptions into one that can represent a global view. Views from the two headteachers portrayed the LfL principles as mutually reinforcing tools which serve as reminders or revelations that propel positive change in leading, teaching and learning.

Having reflected on words like 'tools', 'reminders' or 'revelations', it was important to take these up with the two heads at various informal interviews for further contextual clarity. It became clear that the word 'tools' was used to denote opportunities which could help to improve the practice of leading, teaching, and learning. The BHT made me understand that as reminders, the LfL principles helped to recall the extraordinary importance of certain familiar culturally embedded values like a simple 'thank you' or 'I am sorry' which they would otherwise have tended to ignore in the busy, complex life of the school. But the headteacher equally clarified that the principles are also revelations because they offer novel ideas or ways of doing routine little things.

Thus, taken together, the LfL principles were understood as interrelated tools which reminded or revealed insights which enabled the participants to improve or change for better in relation to leading, teaching and learning. It was increasingly clear that the LfL principles provided spaces for mutual flourishing through challenging support and commitment.

## **Summary**

This chapter has relied on the way headteachers, teachers and pupils perceived learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability to gauge their understanding of the Leadership for Learning principles. As I stressed at the beginning of the chapter, obtaining participants understanding of the principles was not only a prelude to the next chapters but a crucial part of the incorporation process, which I am seeking insights into. In the next two chapters, I explore the processes through which the participants absorbed these perceptions about the LfL principles into the fabric of the daily life of the schools, and the resultant impacts.

## **Chapter 8. Incorporating the LfL principles: participants' insights**

Meaning is key but only if it is shared. And you cannot get shared meaning without purposeful action on many fronts (Fullan, 2016, p. 17).

### **Introduction**

In chapter 7, I highlighted the participants' perception of the LfL principles. Building on this conceptualisation, this chapter considers how they incorporated them into the daily life of their schools. The headteachers – initial beneficiaries and evangelisers of the principles in their schools found new beliefs<sup>10</sup> about themselves, about others, about the idea of a school, and its core activities. Thus, it was important that I first report the way the headteachers of the research schools related to the principles before presenting the emergent LfL-inspired beliefs and how they were incorporated.

### **The headteachers and the LfL principles: a transformative relationship**

Given that research question two is concerned with how the stakeholders incorporated the values of the LfL principles, I asked the two headteachers to shed light on their relationship with the principles. The interview data revealed that the headteachers' encounter with the principles had had a swift transformational effect on them transforming their values and beliefs about leading schools and spurring them on with confidence to improve their schools. As the school B headteacher explained:

When I was exposed to the LfL principles, I appreciated their values, breathed them in, owned them, and they transformed me totally. Upon return from the LfL workshops, I was inspired to go all out to make a difference in improving the learning of all the pupils. So I put into practice what I understood according to the local conditions of my school (BHT).

This claim can be summed up in the following logical sequence: the headteacher understood the ideals of the LfL principles through the lens of her school's parochial context; the ideals were relevant to her and the school; she was transformed by them; and based on that, she progressively incorporated them into the life of her school. These experiences resonated with those of the school A headteacher – AHT, who said: "My encounter with the LfL principles

---

<sup>10</sup> Belief in this context conveys the idea of new knowledge, understanding, orientation, philosophies, slogans or mantra.

during the workshops was a great eye-opening moment because they exposed me to new ways of leading a school and that boosted my confidence as a leader”.

The clarity of these renditions notwithstanding, I was curious for further insights into what specifically spurred the headteachers on to implement the principles. In responding to this question, the headteachers linked their personal transformations to the formation of new beliefs and new ways of leading a school:

As I reflect on the LfL principles, new beliefs about school come up. I believe that the individual person, family and community constitute a school and we are in it to lead, to teach, to learn and to educate together (BHT).

The AHT was more concrete citing his personal attitudinal transformation to clarify his point:

Before I encountered the LfL principles, I used to think I could do everything. But after the training I realised that for the work to be done well, there is the need for collaboration. In that way whether you are in school or not the school will run, learning will take place.

These personal transformations and the accompanying new beliefs progressively became co-owned by teachers, pupils, and parents over time.

### **The LfL and school communities: new thinking, new beliefs**

I should clarify that the collective new beliefs about the LfL principles have their roots in the initial beliefs of the headteachers. Analysis of the interviews, observations and documents, especially minutes of PTA and staff meetings, revealed an array of new beliefs and understanding participants held about themselves, the school and its activities since the introduction of the LfL principles. The most notable converging ones were the ‘we can do it’, ‘the school as the heart of the individual, family and community’, and the ‘no one left behind’ mantras. In these LfL-inspired orientations lay all the new creative imaginations and initiatives for their actualisation.

The ‘we can do it and do it well’ principle was embraced by the participants, especially headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents as a way of reorienting/rebranding themselves within the context of lost confidence. Various participants regarded this rebranding as extremely necessary because of the prevailing perception among Ghanaians that public basic schools such as theirs symbolised poverty, incompetence, mediocrity, and failure. This was a view expressed by most of the participants and teacher AT3’s remark below represented the views well:



The prevailing perception is that public schools are poor, and this is true because we rely on the Government for our needs which are hardly met, compared to the private schools which have everything. They have affluent parents but ours are poor, mostly fisherfolk, and petty traders who cannot afford even food and housing needs.

Considering the lack of resources, the low socio-economic status (SES) of the pupils, and the prevalence of the fatalistic attitude of 'presenteeism' the following perceptions seemed to be held about the public basic schools: their teachers are lazy and mediocre, and the pupils cannot and should not expect quality education (BPTA-chair). Thus, such schools are axiomatic of failure. It was against this background that the stakeholders of the research schools challenged themselves with the new orientation that they can do it; they can excel in teaching and learning.

Evidence emerging from the minutes of PTA and staff meetings following the headteachers' arrival from the LfL workshops showed the two headteachers consistently reminded other stakeholders that together they could transform their schools into enviable learning communities. In the teachers' FGDs in both schools, teachers shared the belief that they were agents of change. When I inquired how they were agents of change and the genesis of that spirit, one of the teachers, BT7 who has been part of school B since 2011 said: "The defeatist attitude among teachers, pupils and parents that 'I can't do it' is now history because when our headmistress returned from the LfL workshops, we challenged ourselves painstakingly and replaced this attitude with the 'I can do it' philosophy". Even with the meagre resources, according to APTA-chair, and AP3, who was a teacher in school A until her retirement in 2007, the headteacher and teachers believed that together they could transform their school into a model of excellence.

This belief was a catalyst for the headteachers and teachers to embrace the broader understanding of the individual, home and community as constituent aspects of the school. As explained in the preceding chapter, this new understanding was instrumental in getting everyone to co-own the school and perceive homes and communities as spaces for dialogue, leadership, accountability and pupils' holistic learning. As teacher AT4 and pupil BS12 concurred, the success of the pupils' learning was contingent on efforts that made homes and communities schooling hot spots.

For individuals, homes and communities to be nourishing spaces for these activities, it follows that everyone must be involved in the school improvement efforts; no one should be left behind. This may have underpinned the concordance emerging from both schools during

the interviews and FGDs that collaboration was the best strategy to achieve their moral purpose – improving pupils’ learning. The participants’ conviction that with self-efficacy and everyone collaborating they could dialogue, lead, account, teach and learn well to achieve their visions provided sufficient insights into their operative philosophies. The practical processes of actualising these LfL-inspired beliefs are taken up in the subsequent sections. Before then, I should clarify that, based on the interviews with the headteachers, teachers, pupils, and my five-month observations, there was no formal collaboration between the two schools. The headteachers, however, acknowledged that they were friends and occasionally consulted each other. This consultation may have accounted for some of the convergences regarding strategies each school deployed to enculturate the LfL principles.

### **Inculcating the ‘we can do it and do it well’<sup>11</sup> self-reconceptualization**

When I asked about the processes involved in the inculcation of this self-belief the responses from headteachers and most of the pupils and teachers were in common tune. The interviews and minutes of PTA and staff meetings in both schools revealed that constant mutual encouragement and appreciation of both the little and the big efforts or achievements of stakeholders was one way the participants inculcated this belief. As AHT elucidated, encouraging teachers and pupils to be free and creative was crucial in developing their confidence. Making conscious effort to celebrate each other’s talents and efforts in addition to mutual encouragement was the key strategy school B used (BHT). This culture of mutual encouragement and appreciation was confirmed by the majority of the pupils during the interviews and FGDs. As BS8 – a Basic Six girl said: “The teachers always say, ‘you can do it if you prioritise your learning everywhere and are active, regular and punctual to school.’” Taking focus on learning as an example, some of the pupils from school A recounted how they were encouraged by the teachers to focus on it: “Every day during morning assembly, our teachers tell us, ‘we need to focus on ...’ and we will say, ‘learning’. They will say, ‘so let's clap for learning for learning is good’, then we all clap for learning” (AS5). This was a dynamic I observed in the trial school as well.

Teachers from both schools including AT7 and BT6 concurred that through constant encouragement they were reasonably successful in inculcating in the pupils the spirit of self-efficacy. As AT7 explained: “We have managed to make the pupils believe that with hard

---

<sup>11</sup> This mantra denotes the stakeholders’ belief that they can improve their schools – make them enviable safe communities of co-existence and learning and professional excellence. Therefore, the pronoun ‘it’ refers to the different activities that link to school improvement.

work and determination in their learning they will achieve their aspirations of becoming doctors, engineers, and lawyers despite their difficult backgrounds”. An intriguing insight into how the strategy of constant encouragement worked, came from some pupils in both schools who said that anytime their headteachers addressed them using the titles of the professions they were aspiring to, it gave them more enthusiasm to learn harder. BS1 said: “I love to see the newscasters because I want to become a journalist so whenever my headteacher or the teachers call me journalist ..., I am inspired to believe in myself and learn more”.

Additionally, deploying the strategy of making the pupils feel proud of themselves and their efforts for being regular and punctual to school, attentive in class, and spending time to do their homework gradually yielded positive results (AT1, BT8). When I asked if it was possible to share with me any sign of positive results as they claimed, AT1 said: “Positive competition. Come to the school early, observe for yourself. You will see the regularity and punctuality of children and their initiatives to succeed in their learning”. My observations of pupils’ regularity and punctuality confirmed this claim, but the observations were for only two school terms so I analysed available pupils’ class attendance registers in both schools from 2014 and 2016. The analysis showed an improvement in general pupils’ regularity and punctuality to school compared to the previous years, perhaps, because values of regularity and punctuality were becoming more rooted in the ethos of the schools with time. However, there were some pupils who were not regular but for reasons which I was not privy to.

The data from both schools also revealed that the deployment of constant encouragement was extended to parents. The greater proportion of parents from both schools were illiterate fisherfolk, who exhibited a fatalistic attitude toward education. According to teachers AT3 and BT6, most of the fisherfolk enculturated their children to believe that they were destined not to rise higher in formal education because of the vicious cycle of poverty they were entrapped in. Thus, as personal observations at PTA meetings, and the analysis of minutes of PTA meetings attested, teachers made conscious efforts to re-orient parents to believe that they [parents] and school together, could help every pupil to rise up the educational ladder.

Both schools had concrete examples of bold successful initiatives of change to convince teachers, pupils and parents that together, they could improve the schools. At the time of the fieldwork, school A had undergone an infrastructure facelift, a feat that resulted from self-belief and collective effort of teachers, headteacher and parents.

Similarly, the ‘we can do it’ belief spurred stakeholders of school B to initiate and implement some difficult projects. Notable among them was how they implemented their

‘Our children deserve decent and safe classrooms’ project. All the stakeholders I interviewed resonated in their renditions that school B was in dire need of classrooms but had their hopes quashed when a new five-classroom block being constructed by the Government was abandoned in 2008 due to a change of political power. According to BHT, efforts to get successive governments to complete the block yielded no positive response. However, rather than being discouraged, their spirit of ‘we can do it’ inspired the school to establish a school farm within its premises to generate funds to improve the classroom block to facilitate teaching and learning. As one of the pupils, BS6 corroborated: “The headteacher, teachers, and we the pupils worked on the maize farm every Friday for about 30 minutes and we got a bumper harvest”. In the words of BHT, the farm generated some income and with contributions from every stakeholder, the school was well placed to improve the abandoned classroom block:

Parents contributed money and we added it to what we got and bought cement. Every child, on their way to school fetched sand along. One of the parents who is a mason plastered the walls and cemented the floor. That is how the self-belief is gradually helping to solve this challenge (BHT).

With permission from the headteacher, the images below which I photographed, represent the conditions of the classrooms before and after the facelift.



Before – the entrance to classroom



Before – inside classroom condition

**Figure 8.1 Condition of classroom before facelift (February 2017)**



After – Cemented classroom floor

### **Figure 8.2 Condition of classroom after facelift (March 2017)**

It could be said that the ‘we can do it’ belief was incorporated in school A and B through stakeholder mutual encouragement, teamwork, appreciation and education. As explained in chapter 7, the ‘we’ as it is used in the above mantra represented all stakeholders at the personal, family and community levels who were considered as constituent parts of the school.

### **The individual, family and community as constitutive aspects of the school**

This new broad conceptualisation of a school was considered by various stakeholders especially the headteachers and teachers of both schools to encourage pupils to learn everywhere, and to re-orient parents and opinion leaders to create spaces beyond the school environment for learning. In other words, as the BHT clarified, this new philosophy aimed to bring everyone on board the school improvement agenda. She added: “We try to make this new understanding part of the school culture by slowly and progressively teaching and encouraging parents and pupils through mutual dialogue and sharing of leadership responsibilities”. Justifying why they adopted the strategy of teaching and encouraging to inculcate this new philosophy outside of the school, teachers AT4 and AT9 said that it was because many illiterate parents believed that the environment outside of the school was for the children to sell items or go to help fish or mend fishing nets. These teachers explained further that most parents did not understand the psychology of the contemporary child and were unable to relate well with their children so they needed to be supported.

Perhaps the most vivid experience about how “operation teach the parents” as BHT called

it, helped to achieve inclusive education in her school was concerned with intermixing visually-impaired and full-sighted pupils within the school. Data from the interviews and FGDs indicated that parents of both the VI and fully-sighted (FS) pupils vehemently resisted mixing the two in the same school because of the culturally held view that the VI were cursed. Thus, it took consistent education to demystify the minds of parents so that these pupils were able to freely interact and learn together (BT4).

Some parents especially AP4, an illiterate fishmonger and BP3, a senior high school teacher, acknowledged the effort of teachers to educate parents on a variety of topics which had helped to improve relationships between certain parents and their children. A document which enabled me to appreciate the efforts of the teachers to educate parents was the minutes of the PTA meetings. Reading through the available minutes of both schools, I noticed time was set aside for teaching the parents on issues relating to their children's education. For example, during the Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016's PTA meeting in school B, a teacher educated parents about the negative effects of taking children to funeral grounds at the expense of their learning.

Apart from these efforts, participants especially the headteachers, teachers and parents roundly praised the open-door policy of the two schools, which helped to extend the scope of the school. In the words of AHT, "we have opened the doors of the school to parents so that they feel free to share in its vision and take it to the home to implement their part towards achieving it". All the parents I spoke to, expressed their gratitude for the open-door policy.

Stakeholders of both schools also adopted some creative initiatives to make homes and communities constituent parts of the schools. One of them was the 'school to home and community outreach programme' where teachers visited communities and homes to engage in dialogue and encourage parents to make them spaces for learning. This programme was a tool used to build close bonds with parents and the communities (BT3). For most of the teachers, this initiative enabled them to have a first-hand personal understanding of the existential living conditions of families, build good relationships, share ideas, and together inspire the pupils to prioritise their learning.

Revelations from the minutes of a PTA meeting of school A recorded the instituting an annual Founder's Day in 2015 to bring together school, families, and communities to collaborate to improve the school. Some of the issues, as the records showed, included how chiefs, community opinion leaders and the media could help to reduce the amount of time pupils spend selling items or fishing, and how to curb both the conundrum of excessive noise and the proliferation of betting and computer games centres. The minutes also indicated that

appeals were made to the library and monuments board to create spaces in their premises for children's learning. In the case of school B, Speech and Prize Giving day was established in 2014 to bring school, families and communities together for similar reasons cited above. As these processes enabled the headteachers, teachers and parents to believe in their capabilities and embrace the broader understanding of a school, they strove to ensure that no one was left behind the LfL-inspired schools' improvement voyage.

### **Leaving no one behind the school's leading and learning voyage**

Analysis of the data, especially the interviews, observations and documents revealed different processes of getting everyone on board the leading and learning life of the two schools. These processes occurred within the schools including classrooms, staff common rooms and canteens as well as beyond the schools.

#### **Carrying everyone along within the school: in the classroom**

Sharing in the processes involved in carrying everyone along in the classroom activities, participants referred to quality supervision, adaptive teaching, balancing teacher-pupil activity, peer-tutoring through group work and networking, regular giving of exercises, and assessing pupils' understanding.

#### *Quality supervision*

During the interviews, participants from both research schools acknowledged some improvements in the learning life of the schools due to quality supervision. Parents from both schools believed that the effective supervision by the headteachers was transforming both the classrooms and the schools into excellent spaces for leading, teaching and learning (AP1, AP2, BP2 & BP5). This view was corroborated by the other participants including the headteachers, teachers, pupils and circuit supervisors. According to the BHT who perceived supervision itself as a process of learning, she was constantly in the classrooms to supervise, not by policing anyone but observing, learning, and offering support after the lessons when necessary. Being curious, I asked what kind of support she offered if there was any, and to this the headteacher said: "The support I gave was to constantly encourage my teachers to vary their teaching approaches, engage the pupils and maintain their attention in the lesson by using familiar imagery to explain things, and encourage them to think critically". Her colleague from school A, AHT shared similarly that "we allow them to lead, to implement

their creativities so long as they do not go against GES policies or the school's vision. What I do is to encourage teachers to make the classrooms inviting for the pupils". The non-policing approach to supervision was confirmed and appreciated by many teachers and pupils. They stressed that the headteachers were in the classrooms to partake in the activities as enlightened novices who learned but also observed to offer helpful insights to improve the learning (AT7, BS10).

An interesting insight from both headteachers was that the supervision responsibility was not only exercised by them but by teachers and pupils as well. In both schools I observed pupils, mostly those who were well behaved and outstanding in different subject areas, supervise fellow pupils to learn in the absence of a teacher. In addition, AHT cited a dynamic where he and his teachers stayed back after school hours to supervise pupils, especially those who lacked learning-friendly homes, to study or do their homework before they went home.

This notwithstanding, in the minutes of staff meetings of school A, it was documented that some teachers and pupils believed only headteachers were responsible for supervision. However, personal observations in the life of both schools clearly showed most of the teachers and pupils embraced supervision as a shared responsibility given the various supervision roles they were playing.

### *Adaptive teaching*

As participants continue to explain how they practised the belief of 'leaving no one behind', some teachers from both schools talked about adapting the teaching to the needs of different categories of pupils. BT5 explicitly referred to "adaptive teaching". Explaining how she practised it, teacher AT3, who has been teaching English in school A for the past nine years, said that she adapted the teaching to the needs of different categories of pupils by paying attention to the soundness of their senses of sight, hearing, and writing and literacy abilities. Regarding paying attention to the needs of all categories of pupils, AT6, a female mathematics teacher with fifteen years of teaching experience explained: "We have been teaching these children for years. We know those who are high, medium and low attainers as well as the introverts and extroverts. So I adapt the teaching and learning by making sure I engage each of these". This was a fact that pupils including AS4 and AS7 acknowledged. However, in school B, most of the visually-impaired pupils I talked to occasionally felt secluded in some of the lessons because some of the teachers were insensitive to their needs. "Some of the teachers are insensitive and forget that we cannot see what they write on the chalk board and have to wait for the full-sighted to help us" (BS8). During the lesson



observations, I realised that both the visually-impaired and full-sighted pupils used the same textbooks and that put the VI at a disadvantage because they need embossed textbooks to be able to learn efficiently and effectively.

Some teachers including AT1, AT2, and BT5 explained that they adapted the teaching and learning activities by using pupils' experiences as entry points. These teachers emphasised that through this approach they better understood the things that pupils value most and the pupils enjoyed and owned the learning. As AT1 and AT2 said, using well known cultural activities, television soap operas, and interspersing of English which was the lingua franca with the local language (L1) during lessons were ways of getting the attention of pupils. Using the Ghanaian culture of reverence for kings and queens as an example, AT2 explained:

The children see kings and queens on televisions or at durbars and they love to be associated with them. So in my class we have the queen(s) and kings (s) of the day. Those who are attentive and participate actively in class are selected by the class and we crown them as the queens or kings of the day. You will realise that everyone wants to be crowned so they strive to be active and attentive in class.

Corroborating the views of their colleague, AT1 and BT3 said they realised from the junior high school (JHS) pupils' conversations that the way telenovelas were packaged and presented attracted them. So they picked insights from some of the telenovelas to package their adaptive pedagogical approach, for example, a role play.

Regarding the bi or multilingual approach as a way of practising adaptive teaching, the APTA-chair, and teachers AT1, and AT7 insisted that it was easier to arouse the interest of the pupils and make meaning concrete to them by using language and images they were familiar with from home and their communities. "I know many pupils who will never contribute in class if you insist on speaking only English but once you intersperse English with the L1 they are able to understand and start to contribute" (AT1). This submission was a practice I observed in an overwhelming proportion of the lessons during which I noted some interesting experiences. For example, whenever a local image or concept was used to explain the meaning of an equivalent in English, pupils got excited and made comments like 'Aha, okay. Me nim', which translates as I know it. Others would begin to mention the local equivalents of the concept.

Notwithstanding the fact that teachers in both schools interspersed English with the local language to teach, most of the teachers in school B and pupil BS10 expressed a contrary

opinion stressing that it was apt to use only English. As pupil BS10 said: “We all want to learn English well because if you don’t pass it in exams, you can’t progress. Also, English is one of the languages in the world many people speak”. Another way of carrying everyone along the leading and learning voyage was to balance teacher-pupil activity in classrooms.

### *Balancing teacher-pupil activity in class lessons*

Teachers like AT4 and BT6 emphasised that if the classroom was to be a learning space, teachers must consciously balance the teacher-pupil activity. Teachers shared how they devised different means of getting pupils to own the teaching-learning activity as much as they did. “I start each lesson by allowing the pupils to review the previous lesson, and during the lesson they come to the board to solve problems, demonstrate, or do group work presentation and defend it” (AT4). Where varied methods were used, pupils better understood and enjoyed the learning especially when they took part in creating the teaching and learning aids (AT9). For BT8 who was a class teacher of Basic Six, he encouraged the pupils to listen to News and make notes on the main story for social studies lessons. The notes were inspected, and pupils randomly selected to present to the class. The presentations helped pupils to learn the art of listening, questioning, and arguing.

Teacher-pupil interaction during lessons and the pedagogical adaptations teachers used to facilitate this was one of the key areas of my classroom observations. I was particularly interested in some indicators including the socio-emotional atmosphere during lessons; presentation of the teaching and learning activities; opportunities for participation in classroom decisions; and freedom for creativity, talent expression, and taking the lead according to assigned tasks. Analysis of the observational data on these parameters showed that in most of the lessons, teachers sequentially and logically organised lessons using varied pedagogical skills. But, there were very few lessons where opportunities were given to pupils to participate in making decisions about issues affecting the class. In school B, class leaders and cupboard overseers were occasionally prompted by teachers or colleagues before carrying out their responsibilities. However, in both schools, the socio-emotional milieu of most of the lessons was positive, exhibiting purposeful learning environments that were characterised by mutual respect and integrity, and cooperative learning. A considerable number of the lessons showed pupils creatively expressing their talents in multiple ways especially in terms of maths problem-solving, story writing, and basic local technology, thus, making the lessons appeal to cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of their learning.

Another aspect of the teaching-learning activity through which teachers and pupils tried to carry each other along was the assigning, executing and marking of assignments. Nearly all the teachers, pupils and parents who took part in the interviews referred to the giving of assignments to pupils in one way or the other. For most of the teachers, giving pupils class exercises was the most effective way of getting them to account for their part of the teaching and learning activity, and for teachers to assess the effectiveness of their teaching. Thus, teacher AT1 believes that painstakingly assessing pupils' exercises with feedback should be professionally and constructively done.

Personal observations in the classrooms in both schools showed that except for brief exercises teachers interspersed during the lessons, most of the substantial class assignments were often neither completed nor assessed during the lessons, perhaps because of time constraints (30-35 minutes per lesson), and large class sizes. According to the pupils' exercise books which I analysed, enough homework was regularly given to the pupils but there was still a tremendous challenge in getting the pupils to do the exercises. Some pupils copied verbatim from their classmates or did not do the exercises at all, a reality which teachers from both schools lamented. Nonetheless, some pupils engaged themselves in peer-tutoring and group work.

#### *Pupil-pupil tutoring, and group work*

Perhaps the most exciting experience I had talking to and observing pupils in the research schools was pupils tutoring fellow pupils or doing collaborative projects. Pupil-pupil tutoring, according to BS6, a Basic Nine boy, occurred in three ways; firstly, in the absence of a teacher, pupils stepped forward to guide their classmates to learn; secondly, the senior pupils or 'study leaders' as they are called in school B, guided the juniors to learn; and thirdly, pupils engaged each other in educative dialogues during break hours. I observed pupils lead their classmates in Science and English lessons in school B, and mathematics in school A. What was admirable for me was the mutual confidence, cooperation and respect pupils accorded the pupil guiding the learning activity.

It was also observed that the break hours were not only for food and play but for discourses and peer-tutoring. This was where the idea of dialogue as a relationship for learning first dawned on me because of the mature way pupils turned their interactions into powerful avenues of learning. In school A, it was common to see pupils holding opposing views on concepts or formulae and surround their teachers in the staff common room to seek explanation and adjudication. School B was slightly different because rather than pupils

surrounding their teachers, they were mostly glued to the Junior Graphic Newspaper analysing, arguing, and proposing varying approaches to answering puzzles and past examination questions on a range of subjects including English, mathematics, science and social studies in the Newspaper. These observations are concrete revelations of teacher AT1's perception of learning as a reality that entailed grappling with and assessing issues, making connections to personal experiences for enlightenment, understanding and finding solutions (p. 87). The reality of pupils in the research schools analysing, arguing and proposing varying approaches and ideas to understanding of concepts and problems exemplifies the contemporary view of learning (p. 25) that learning is an activity that entails testing, colliding, diverging and merging of ideas, thinking about thinking and developing a learning identity. As the observation data revealed pupils with a predilection for vocational skills were together weaving things, making beads, and those interested in mechanics and electricals were seen joining dry cells to generate electricity. The images below (photographed by me) which I show with permission from the BHT visually illustrate the culture of peer-tutoring or group work.



**Figure 8.3 Picture showing peer-tutoring on how to weave during break hour**



Group study of Junior Graphic

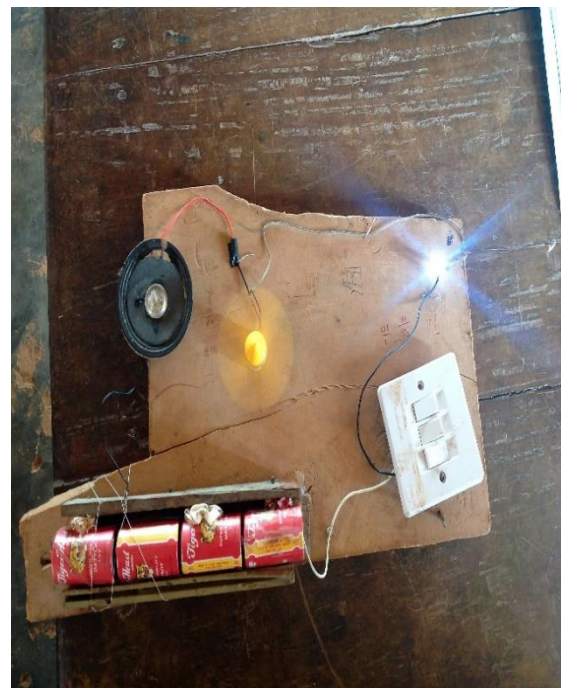


National Junior Graphic

**Figure 8.4 Pictures of pupils doing group study and a sample of Junior Graphic**



Group project on basic mechanics and electricity



End result of the group effort

**Figure 8.5 Pictures of pupils carrying out a group project and the result**

### **Carrying everyone along: at the school-wide level**

Analysis of the interviews, general school observations, minutes of PTA and staff meetings revealed varieties of collective or individual processes – efforts, creativities, and initiatives taken at the school-wide level which kept teachers and pupils on board with improvement efforts in both schools.

#### *Collective initiatives*

Both research schools established social safety nets through which they supported members especially the pupils to remain in school, embrace the teaching and learning activities and improve them. As AHT and some teachers (AT4, AT5) explained, they initiated and implemented what they called ‘school-level parenting’ and ‘every gift counts’ initiatives as processes for members to lead, engage in dialogue, familiarise, understand, and mutually support one another. These initiatives were inspired by outcomes of evaluative staff meetings in 2013 (AT2). It was discovered that there was unhealthily little familiarity among teachers as well as the pupils, which made mutual appreciation and rendering of appropriate support difficult.

Picking on the school-level parenting initiative, teacher AT9 elaborated that initially the initiative targeted the Basics Seven to Nine pupils (12-15 years) who faced the complicated processes of making teenage life choices. As AT6 remarked, the choices were mostly disastrous for the pupils’ educational progress because of lack of parental care and support. Thus, as part of the school’s vision to improve the learning and eventual success of every pupil, it introduced this initiative. Based on the similarity of need, a group of pupils were assigned to appropriate teachers as school parents whose job was two-pronged: to be available to the pupils, understand their needs and communicate to appropriate authorities, and to accompany them and sustain their link with the school (AHT). This initiative, as teachers explained, met with mixed results. Whereas resilient teachers like AT4 were successful in sustaining the link with more than 50 per cent of her pupils, some of whom were in tertiary institutions, most of the other teachers could not sustain it because of practical challenges. Because of the support teachers were rendering, some parents shirked their responsibilities and some pupils were only interested in monetary support (AT1).

However, the ‘every gift count’ initiative, which was mostly about material contributions to support the needy, was appraised as the most straightforward way of not leaving anyone behind. As most of the pupils and teachers shared, teachers contributed books, pens and pencils, clothing, footwear, food and money to meet the needs of the poor children. As my



observations revealed, some of the pupils also shared their meals and books with needy fellow pupils. Thus, through the ‘every gift counts’ initiative, needy pupils who otherwise would have dropped out of school remained.

A similar initiative in school B was what the teachers referred to as the ‘each other’s gate keeper’ initiative through which members were conscientised to contribute to the support of everyone. A slight difference between this initiative and the ‘every gift counts’ initiative concerned the scope. Whereas ‘every gift counts’ emphasised material gifts, this initiative emphasised both material gifts and other non-material activities such as the inculcation of mutual appreciation, recognition, support and challenge. Regarding the material support, the school relied heavily on both the contributions of teachers and its farm produce to support its poor pupils to keep them clothed and well fed, and to make them fit for the leading and learning journey. When I asked pupils if they had other opportunities to learn how to lead, many of them from both schools said yes, and cited school-level leadership opportunities. But, unique to school B, there was a revelation by one of the pupils that “this year the PTA of our school sponsored six of us to attend a leadership workshop for youth” (BS11). Apart from these collective processes however, there were also individual initiatives at both schools which aimed to carry everyone in the school along.

### *Individual initiatives*

There were so many personal creativities stemming from the main participants as a way of carrying everyone along. Perhaps, particularly deserving attention because of the degree of personal sacrifice involved were the ‘moving library’ initiative of headteacher AHT, and the ‘they deserve better’ initiative of teacher BT1. Considering the difficulty in the provision of books and lack of library spaces, the AHT initiated what teacher AT1 called ‘a moving library’. This was something I personally observed where the headteacher bought story books, spreads these books on the veranda of the school, and pupils from the different year groups took turns to borrow the books. Each pupil read their books, identified key words, and summarised them according to their understanding, and came to discuss them with the headteacher or the teachers. The headteacher continued this activity each day after school, and at the weekends. As he explained: “I extend my stay each day in the school to supervise pupils to learn and provided a safe presence over the weekends in the school for interested pupils to learn in the school premises”.

In school B, the resource teacher, BT1 could not accept the discrimination against the visually-impaired pupils with regards to textbooks. He explained that there were no embossed

textbooks for the VI pupils who studied in the same classroom as the full-sighted. As he lamented:

The VI are already disadvantaged because they had to wait for their colleagues [sic.] to read for them before they could braille. So I started the 'they deserve better' initiative by simply scanning relevant passages and embossing them for the VI so that they could be on the same page as the FS.

Apart from the headteachers and teachers, there was evidence in the interview and observation data to indicate that pupils took initiatives for the support of one another. This could explain why most of the pupils from both schools rated spirit of sharing as one of the experiences which made them prefer being in school rather than at home. BS7, a Basic Six girl, for instance, was well known in her school for sensitivity to the needs of others especially with her time, talents, and gifts. Not only did she share this with me during the interviews but her mother (BP2), colleagues (BS8 – VI), BS9, and personal observations attested to this. As her mother had earlier shared, whenever her daughter (BS7) needed a book, she asked for two and would justify that the other book would be given to her poor classmates to use. Given that the moral purpose of both schools was to improve the pupils' learning, it was apt to stress the processes leading to this purpose. However, it would be reductionistic to ignore the avenues through which the headteachers and teachers were themselves carried along the leading, dialogic, learning and accounting life of the school.

#### *The headteachers and teachers too carried each other along*

Data from both schools showed they adopted the rotational chairing of staff meetings. Both schools also adopted professional development programmes including school and cluster-based INSET<sup>12</sup> and workshops as avenues to stay tuned with the leading and learning activities. It was the BHT who first mentioned that she got every teacher in her school involved in leading the life of the school beyond the classroom and committee levels by ensuring that teachers took turns to moderate staff meetings. When I asked teachers if there were concrete opportunities in the school that enabled them to experience leading, initiating dialogue and accounting, many teachers from both schools referred to the rotational moderation of meetings.

---

<sup>12</sup> School-based INSET denotes in-service training organised by staff at the school level while cluster-based INSET represents in-service training organised among a cluster of schools in a locality.



Asked whether the rotational moderation of meetings had any impact on them, teachers resonated that it was a practical help in developing their leadership skills. However, in terms of dispositions, there were divergences because whereas teachers like AT6 and BT8 looked forward to the challenge of leading their colleagues, AT2 and BT4 found the process cumbersome. As AT2 remarked, she found it extremely difficult to balance between control and freedom when colleagues became too pushy and used strong and unpleasant language to win arguments. In the minutes of staff meetings of both schools between 2014 and 2017, I noticed instances of dialogue-driven as well as emotionally charged experiences. There was a staff meeting moderated by BT4 during which she asked for another teacher to substitute her in the chair because of the difficulty in positively influencing the rather emotionally charged meeting. But there were other meetings which were cooperatively managed through dialogue. Nonetheless, this rotational leading was credited by many teachers as one of the best hands-on opportunities for them to lead their co-equals in discussing challenging issues concerning their schools.

Teachers also cited the school and cluster-based INSETs, which they claimed contributed to their capacity or professional development. Both schools, as I discovered from the minutes of PTA meetings organised regular school-based INSETs in which teachers with more updated knowledge or pedagogies on certain topics across different subjects taught colleagues to build their capacities. Almost all the teachers and the two headteachers stated that the school-based INSET enabled teachers to improve their professional skills but the cluster-based INSET was rarely organised because of logistical challenges including transportation.

Perhaps the most fascinating teacher-initiated creativity that proved to be helpful to institutional as well as their professional development and conduct was the WhatsApp social media platforms, which teachers of both schools created. The establishment of these platforms was part of the teachers' initiative to maximise the prevailing technology to improve communication, mutual access, professional knowledge, teamwork and networking (AT7, BT2). The teachers stressed that the WhatsApp group provided a suitable space for peer-review in relation to their professional practice. Teacher BT7 who had great admiration for WhatsApp described it as a great medium for practising critical friendship – teachers critically reviewing each other's attitude, behaviour and conduct.

These positive impressions notwithstanding, some of the teachers (AT2, BT2) expressed their misgivings citing abuse or excessive use of the platform by some colleagues. "I withdrew from the WhatsApp platform because some teachers use it for political debates"

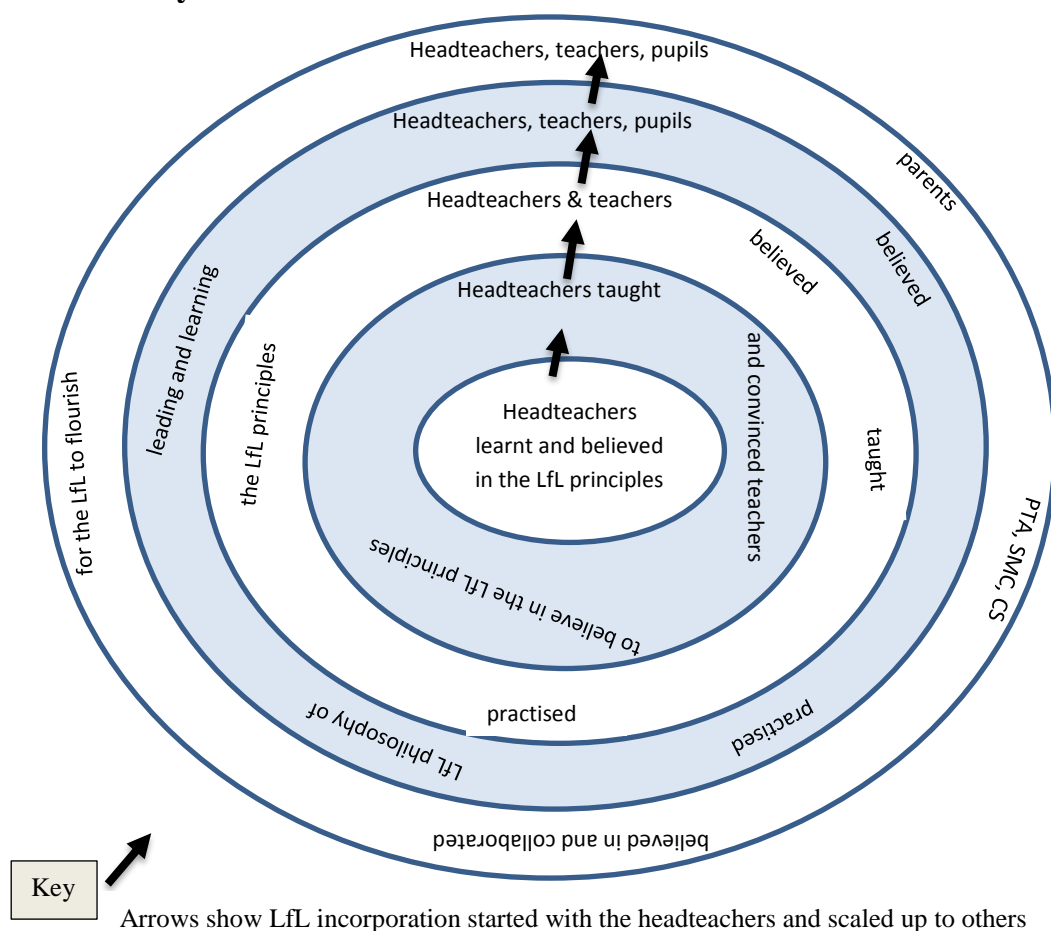
(AT2). Resonating with his colleague, teacher BT2 added that some teachers were not prudent in the use of WhatsApp, chatting while lessons were on or starting lessons late because they were busy with the App. In these different ways, the main participants – headteachers, teachers and pupils carried everyone along in the leading and learning activities within the schools. But, the efforts transcended the walls of the schools to include other stakeholders given the broad conceptualisation of a school on which the stakeholders operated.

### **Carrying everyone along: outside the school walls**

During my unstructured observations at the community level, I noticed that some of the teachers who stayed in the same neighbourhood as the pupils provided free weekend tuition for all pupils in the community. Other stakeholders including some parents, pupils, and PTA chairs played significant roles outside of the schools to carry everyone along. As BP2 who is also a teacher, shared, she discussed with her children and they agreed to cut certain luxuries at home and used that money to buy books, pens, pencils or footwear to support needy pupils in the school. Her counterpart of school A, AP3, who is a retired teacher, took it upon herself to educate illiterate parents on how to profitably manage their meagre resources to benefit them and their children's education.

This was hardly shared during my conversations with teachers and parents but pupil BS6 stated that in his community, the chief and the opinion leaders organised extra tuition for all basic school pupils, and sports and excursions for them during vacations. According to this pupil, these activities enabled the pupils attending different schools to learn from one another and to gain practical knowledge of things during the excursions. Closely linked to BS6's point on pupils learning from colleagues of other schools, was a common expression among other pupils from both schools that through text messaging, posting on Facebook, tweeting, and chatting on WhatsApp, they networked with other pupils to learn (AS7). These efforts, it can be said, were ways through which stakeholders of the schools carried each other along the leading and learning activities.

## Summary



**Figure 8.6 Summary of how LfL principles were institutionalised**

## **Chapter 9. Practising the LfL-induced beliefs: impacts**

“We have become so accustomed to the presence of change that we almost never stop to think what it means for others around us who might be in change situations” (Fullan, 2016, p. 18)

### **Introduction**

In line with the primary objective of this research which seeks insights into the processes of incorporating the LfL principles, I highlighted in the two preceding chapters what the participants knew about the LfL principles (chapter 7), and how they practised what they knew and believed (chapter 8).

This chapter reports the impacts of the LfL incorporation. Analysis of the data mainly the interviews and documents including minutes of PTA and staff meetings, attendance registers of teachers and pupils, and pupils’ exercise books revealed improvements in the schools. The most recurring positive changes were attitudinal change towards professional commitment, improvement in professional development, infrastructure and facilities, interpersonal relationships, and pupils’ growth. These improvements were observed at the personal levels, school level and beyond school contexts.

### **Attitudinal change**

The participants from schools A and B repeatedly referred to attitudinal change and the phrase was used mainly to denote the improvements in the stakeholders’ mindsets, professional commitment, and confidence to initiate change.

#### **Improvement in personal attitudes**

As highlighted in the preceding chapter, the two headteachers were categorical that following their exposure to the LfL principles, their attitudes and worldviews towards leadership, learning, dialogue and accountability changed. They moved from the mentality of ‘I can and should do everything’ to that of ‘let’s do it together’. Most of the participants, specially the circuit supervisors, teachers and parents from both schools concurred with the view that the headteachers were attitudinally transformed. The circuit supervisors – ACS and BCS whom I later realised were good friends and swapped circuits between 2011 and 2016 during Ghana Education Service staff transfers, emphasised they were awestruck by the headteachers’ phenomenal transformation regarding their openness to dialogue and sharing leadership and accountability. During my 52-minute interview with BCS, he mentioned five

times his admiration for the positive attitude the BHT had brought to everything in the school since her return from the LfL workshops.

It was in the context of this exemplarity and creativity as demonstrated by the BHT that some teachers including BT1 and BT8 described the headteacher as courageous and confident in initiating and implementing the necessary changes at the school. This corroborated the headteacher's own earlier claim that it took her courage and belief in the 'no one should be left behind' mantra to convince teachers and parents to incorporate the visually-impaired and autistic children in the school. According to her, dialogue, courage, and resilience were her 'weapons', and she credited her exposure to the LfL workshops which kept reminding her of the need to nurture and celebrate everyone's talents.

In school A stakeholders described the headteacher as selfless, transparent, committed, disciplined, principled, and practical. The female teacher, AT7 said: "If one day I become a headteacher, I want to be like this man. He is my role model. He is so exemplary that only a person with no conscience will not want to support his efforts." The headteacher himself said that he used to believe he could do everything until his exposure to the LfL workshops, where he gained insights about shared leadership and accountability.

Perhaps, the most interesting reality, which I can attest to, came from the pupils of both schools who observed that their headteachers left their doors open, unlike before. As AS7, a Basic Nine girl stated: "Our headteacher is so good. He trusts us; he never closes the office when we are in school. Everyone can go in there any time for books or counselling". Probing for insights into how long this had been going on, she said, since he arrived as headteacher. Analysing the records, I realised that the AHT had been leaving his office door open since 2010 and he explained in a PTA meeting on 01/06/2010 that it was part of his belief in transparency and open administration.

The attitudinal change was however, not only limited to the headteachers but also the other stakeholders. As both circuit supervisors observed parents who were uncooperative and used to come to the school to attack teachers no longer do that. Many teachers from both schools corroborated this claim.

Recalling their experiences with different circuit supervisors (CSs) over the years, many teachers also acknowledged the change in attitude of the recent CSs describing them as friends who were interested in supporting them [teachers] to do their work well rather than policing them. The CSs confirmed this claim because they perceived themselves as critical friends. These attitudinal changes, apart from being linked to the stakeholders' worldviews about the nature of their roles, were also connected to professional commitment.

### **Improvement in professional commitment**

I use 'professional commitment' as an umbrella term to capture the signs of improvement in fidelity to duty, self-efficacy and effectiveness of stakeholders. Commitment was a household word among participants of both schools which was used to denote regularity and punctuality, attention to duty, and personal initiatives. From the lens of most of the auxiliary participants including parents (AP2, BP3), there has been a remarkable improvement in the commitment of teachers.

In a submission which best summarised the views of most of the auxiliary participants about teacher commitment, the APTA-chair said:

You live overseas so you may not understand this, but I tell you that teacher absenteeism and presenteeism are bad in public basic schools in this country. Teachers will not come to school, others come late, do little and go back home. This was a problem for us too but for the past three or four years, teacher regularity and punctuality have improved. Teachers are now more committed.

Being curious I asked what may have accounted for the change. To this the PTA chair said effective supervision by the headteachers. But teachers added intrinsic and extrinsic motivation including exemplarity of their headteachers as part of what inspired the positive change. Some of the parents I interviewed (AP2, AP5, BP2, & BP4) also believed that the headteachers were primarily responsible for the improvement but added that teachers were outstanding in their commitment to the pupils' growth. Both headteachers described their teachers and pupils as impressive regarding their commitment.

These commendations were commonplace in staff meetings which I observed during the fieldwork. I also spotted evidence of staff commitment in minutes of staff meetings (2012 to 2016), which I analysed. In school B, the headteacher was impressed by the personal initiatives of the resource teachers whose main responsibility was to support the visually-impaired but took on additional responsibilities of teaching other pupils. BHT attributed the high level of commitment to the conducive school environment and the spirit of 'we can do it' mantra. The AHT had also among other improvements, stressed his teachers' positive attitude toward improvising TLMs to make the teaching and learning more inviting for the pupils.

The headteachers expressed their joy at the improvement in pupils' regular attendance and punctuality as well, despite the difficult backgrounds of some of them. As headteacher BHT

explained her school was not located within any community and many pupils walk for over an hour to get to school yet between 6.00 am and 6.30 am some of them were already at school. This was because the pupils wanted to learn, and the schools provided a good environment for that (AHT, BT4, AS7).

From the lens of peer to peer evaluation, most of the teachers from both schools described themselves as outstanding in their commitment to duty. Teacher BT1 who had been in the school for six years claimed 96 per cent of the teachers were very committed, cooperative, united and productive. Touching on their productivity, teacher BT2, based on his seven-year experience in school B and 16 years with GES, said that unlike other schools, the idea of presenteeism did not exist in his school. Resonating with their colleagues from school B, teachers AT3 and AT5 claimed teachers were not only committed but worked as a team. As AT2 reminded me: “You can see that staff in this school work together, consulting each other for help and networking”. These observed changes were corroborated by some pupils during the interviews. At the end of each interview, I asked pupils who have between five to twelve years of experience school to share any positive change they observed about their schools say in the past five or six years. This question was repeated at the end of the FGDs as well. Many things were mentioned but the most recurring was the commitment of the headteachers and teachers.

These commitments notwithstanding; some participants notified me of some grey areas which needed improvement. Starting with the teachers, the headteachers and teacher BT1 as well as pupils AS7, BS6 and BS10 concurred that some teachers were lazy and uncooperative. The AHT cited instances where some of his staff teamed up with pupils and their parents to promote indiscipline. He also remarked about some teachers who agreed to new collective initiatives such as the ‘silent hour’ and ‘school-level supervised homework’ but refused to cooperate for effective implementation. Both headteachers lamented the challenge of teacher punctuality despite some slight improvements. Some teachers like AT8 and BT5 acknowledged that punctuality was a big challenge citing themselves as some of the culprits. They attributed the problem to lack of an effective transportation system. My analysis of teachers’ attendance records from 2014 to 2017 and observations during the fieldwork confirmed that whereas teacher regularity was outstanding, the same could not be said of punctuality because a good number of teachers arrived in school after 8.00 am.

However, BT5 believed that even if teachers were not punctual because they arrived in school after 8.00 am, they were most punctual to their lessons which started at 8.10 am and

worked hard. Except on a few occasions during my classroom-level observations, teachers were punctual to their lessons.

### **Improvement in teacher professional development**

Teacher professional development was another aspect of the study schools, which stakeholders claimed has improved. Linked to the ‘we can do it well’ mantra, many teachers were inspired to upgrade their academic credentials, pedagogical, and leadership skills. The circuit supervisors were the first to hint that over the past five or six years staff of the study schools made strides in intellectual and professional competencies. Some teachers spoke with pride that since their schools took the stance that they could improve (since 2009 for school B and 2010 for school A), the headteachers had been encouraging them to develop their competencies. This inspired teachers to pursue further studies to improve their subject content knowledge, research and teaching skills (AT1, BT5).

Even illiterate parents like AP2 and BP6, based on their experiences of the excellent knowledge and pedagogical skills of the teachers acknowledged teachers’ professional transformation. This observation by the parents confirmed AT1 and BT2’s views that the more professionally savvy teachers were the more impact they had on others. It was a common utterance among pupils of both schools including AS7, BS6, and BS8, that they wanted to be like some of their teachers because of their deep level of knowledge and pedagogical skills.

However, teachers expressed the challenges they encountered to improve themselves. Regarding their academic upgrading, every teacher I interviewed lamented that they never got any monetary support and had to use their meagre salaries to finance their studies and their family needs. They did however, acknowledge the support of their schools where according to AT1 and BT6, their headteachers relieved them of their teaching duties so that they could pursue their studies. A further acknowledgement came from school A’s teachers (AT2, AT8) that through the networking of their headteacher, teachers benefited from a series of school-level workshops organised for them by the Sabre Trust on child-centred teaching and learning. In the case of school B, the PTA has been sponsoring both the teachers and pupils to attend leadership workshops and seminars (BHT). The school-based INSET was also cited by many teachers as a tool which enabled them to improve in their subject knowledge and pedagogical adaptations because, as one of them said: “Some teachers are just so good, experienced and up to date with certain subjects and topics, and so when they take



us through you gain new insights on the subject content or how to teach certain topics” (BT4).

### **Improvement in physical environment and facilities**

Regarding the physical environment and facilities, every participant acknowledged some level of improvement but the degree of it differed between the two schools. This was quite understandable given that the location, nature and composition of the two schools were different as I described in chapter five. Thus, improvements were similar in some respects but diverged in others.

The common areas of convergence in terms of improvement in physical infrastructure were the schools’ connection to the national electricity grid, running water, and improvement in general hygiene. As BHT explained, her school had had running water since 2004 but was only connected to electricity in 2012 through collaborative efforts of the school management and parents. One of the female teachers, BT5 described the connection to electricity as crucial because whenever the weather was cloudy, visibility in the classrooms was poor and affected teaching and learning.

However, views from other stakeholders including pupils and teachers from both schools during the interviews regarded the availability of potable water, toilets and urinals as key improvements. As AHT, whose claim was confirmed by some teachers, pupils, parents and circuit supervisors, said:

The school I inherited was in a pathetic state especially infrastructurally. It was connected to electricity but we had no running water and toilet. The Sea shore served as both urinal and toilet space where pupils and inhabitants of the community competed to relieve themselves. Some teachers went back home to ease themselves. But through team effort and networking, I got an NGO from the Netherlands which provided all these facilities for us.

The joy of having these facilities was not only because they kept the pupils in the school but also the inculcation of a strong sense of hygiene in the pupils made the school gain a reputation for being a model of hygiene and environmental friendliness (AP3, ACS).

These experiences converged with those of school B. Given its location in the forest, it was dangerous for the pupils to urinate or ease themselves in the bush because of the possibility of being bitten by snakes or scorpions. Thus, having toilets and urinals, and running potable water was a great improvement in the school. Teacher BT7, pupil BS3, and

parent BP2 attributed the improvements to the quality leadership of the headteacher who herself attributed most of her insights to the LfL workshops she attended in 2009 and 2010.

These areas of convergence notwithstanding, there were improvements which were peculiar to each school. The headteacher, teachers, pupils, parents and the CS of school A variously described the physical state of the school before its renovation as horrible, and a health and learning hazard. However, as teacher AT6 said the ingenuity, resilience and networking of the headteacher and teachers AT1, AT2, AT5, and the CS inspired the metropolitan assembly to renovate the school. The pictures below, which were provided by teacher AT2 with permission from the headteacher, depicted the state of the classroom buildings before and after 2014 when they were renovated.



Before the renovation

**Figure 9.1 State of classroom buildings before 2014**



After the renovation

**Figure 9.2 State of buildings after 2014**

The circuit supervisor who collaborated with the school to improve the physical infrastructure said that the school's renovation was a big relief because it had become a health hazard

discouraging some teachers and pupils from coming to school. In appreciation of the infrastructural facelift, a parent exclaimed during the PTA meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014 as follows: “Who will believe that this school will be in this respectable state! We give thanks to the headteacher and the teachers for their hard work”.

Another positive change related to the interference of the activities of fishermen and fishmongers. The proximity of the school perimeter fence to the Ocean made its pillars suitable anchor points for the fisherfolks to tie their ropes and pull their nets ashore, usually for many hours and with the accompaniment of workaday rhythmical choruses. This led not only to the collapse of the school’s fence walls but also distracted the teaching and learning activities (AT6). Also connected to the fishing activities was the drying of the ‘momoni’ – rotten fish along the Sea shore which fouled the school environment and rendered it unconducive for learning. Remnants of these activities were still things I observed and experienced while conducting my fieldwork. However, through collaboration between the school, community leaders and the Police, these practices reduced appreciably.

In school B, the most worrying challenge for stakeholders was physical mobility because of the school’s hilly, slippery and eroded clay based terrain. Teachers and parents recalled how they often fell as they accessed the school through the hilly slippery paths. The most moving narration came from two visually-impaired pupils (BS8 & BS12) who showed me scars which resulted from falling because of the slippery path, or the gullies in the school compound, created by severe erosion. As BS12 explained: “There was a time I felt like not coming to school again because of the unfriendly physical environment but the love everyone shows us makes us want to be in school”.

Although this challenge of physical mobility was not completely solved, there were some improvements. A notable one which every participant talked about was the concrete staircase which an alumnus collaborated with the school to construct. It was about 75 per cent completed but as the headteacher said, it significantly improved the physical mobility of the stakeholders, reducing the number of people falling while climbing the hill to almost zero. The pictures below show the unimproved and improved aspects of the footpath to the school.



Unimproved footpath



Improved concrete footpath

### **Figure 9.3 Pictures of unimproved and improved footpath to school B**

In addition to the improvement in the physical environment, BP1 who doubled as a parent and resource teacher of the school, stated that the school made a lot of strides concerning acquisition of teaching and learning materials for the visually-impaired pupils. She mentioned that through the efforts of the headteacher, an NGO donated an embosser, printer, CCTV and a computer to the school. The partially visually-impaired pupils including BS8 and BS12 were pleased with the CCTV which they said enlarged the size of letters of words and enabled them to read. Having listened to participants of both schools, analysed minutes of PTA and staff meetings, and made personal observations, school A was better in terms of physical infrastructure. The following words from teachers of both schools confirmed my conclusion. Whereas AT9 said: “This school has seen a phenomenal infrastructure transformation and we all appreciate it”, BT8 remarked: “Looking at the physical environment, there is very little change or improvement”. But stakeholders of both schools commended the phenomenal improvement in interpersonal relationships.

### **Improvement in interpersonal relationships**

Interpersonal relationships constituted a complex web of interactional dynamics between stakeholders in the context of both co-equality and asymmetry of power, age, gender and professional experiences. This web of relationships was expressed within-school as well as outside-school levels. Relationships within the school were characterised by headteacher-teacher, teacher-teacher, teacher-pupil, and headteacher-pupil interactions. The outside school relationships were two-pronged involving school and parents, circuit supervisors, alumni and

other schools; and third-party collaborators – NGOs, parent-parent, and PTA-SMC interactions. The interview data and minutes of PTA and staff meetings from both schools confirmed improvements in interpersonal relationships at these levels but the scale of cordiality depended on the unique context of each school.

## **Within school**

### *Headteacher-teacher and teacher-teacher relationships*

Having listened to the various stakeholders as well as tracing the history of interpersonal relationships within the schools through the minutes of staff meetings, I discovered that both schools had histories of unfriendly inter-teacher relationships but had progressively improved over the years. Two retired teachers from both schools (AP3 & BP5) who are parents because of their adopted children in the schools, emphasised that in their days in active service, neither their heads nor themselves managed the different attitudes, ideologies, and temperaments well which created deep divisions and quarrels among teachers. They both attributed the causes of the divisions among other things, to the divide and rule tactic of their headteachers and lack of essential spaces such as staff common rooms where teachers could work and socialise. However, the current headteachers' prioritisation of developing cordial relationships has enkindled improvement in other aspects of their schools. As AP3 said:

When I compare the current relationships in the school to our time, I can say that the current teacher-teacher relationship is by far better because the headteacher paid attention to interpersonal relationships, and being a trustworthy person, it helped to create a good atmosphere. He also created a staff common room which provided teachers a space to socialise, share sensitive personal issues, and work.

In concordance with his fellow retiree, BP5 from school B said that the school he and his colleagues dreaded going to because of inter-teacher cliques and tensioned relationships was now morphed into a space of cordiality and friendship that teachers yearned to be in.

Resonating with the parents were teachers AT3, BT4, and BT6 who experienced the leadership of at least two previous headteachers in their respective schools. They acknowledged improvements in inter-teacher and teacher-headteacher relationships and credited their headteachers for the feat. Apart from personal observations of staff meetings which were often characterised by freedom of speech, and mutual respect, the analysis of voices in minutes of staff meetings showed a trend that moved away from the near monotone of headteachers instructions to a more collegial and multi-voice exchanges. Conversations in

both schools showed a movement away from use of harsh words to more gentle words. For example, the minutes showed that a staff meeting of school B held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2010 ended abruptly because teachers resorted to attacking each other's personalities which led to one describing the other as daft and undeserving to be a teacher. However, two years later, in an end of school term evaluative meeting, these teachers were describing each other as being committed, regular, and collaborative.

Responding to a question I asked about how they improve inter-personal relationships, the two headteachers said that it involved resilience and investment of quality time and energy. Perhaps the most apt view which summarised the views of all the participants about the headteachers' claims came from the BPTA-chair's description of the BHT. He described the headteacher as a genius in combining freedom and strictness; commendation and scolding, and diplomacy and plainness.

The most fascinating experience of teacher-teacher and teacher-headteacher relationships came from my observation of them during canteen break. In school A, the teachers, most of whom brought meals from home shared from each other's plates in the staff common room signifying the appreciable level of mutual trust. School B was even better because the headteacher, teachers, and pupils took their meals at the canteen, with the headteacher and teachers eating together as they chatted freely. Another strand of the web of the within-school interrelationships was that of headteacher/teacher and pupils.

#### *Headteacher/teacher-pupil relationships*

Revelations from pupils, parents, teachers and headteachers of both schools showed that the cordial relationships among staff trickled down to the pupils as well. Literally all the teachers I interviewed claimed that they showed the pupils love, respect and were sacrificing so much for the pupils, who recognised and reciprocated. Teacher AT4 described their relationship with the pupils as the best and her counterpart, BT6 considered it as fantastic. Corroborating the claims of the teachers were parents including AP2, BP2, BP4, and some pupils who used words such as fantastic, caring, cordial, outstanding, lovely, and enhancing to describe teacher-pupil relationships. Some pupils (AS3, BS5) added that the cordial relationships with their teachers improved their engagement in the teaching and learning activities.

Regarding pupil-pupil relationships, most of the parents tagged it as all-embracing, enriching and the best. One of the parents who based her claims on personal observation and reports from her son said:

You know the school is an inclusive school with the visually-impaired pupils and the regular ones learning together. They mingle so well that no one is isolated because the school has inculcated in the pupils the values of friendship, sharing and respect for the dignity of everyone (BP2).

These were facts pupils from both schools confirmed during the interviews and FGDs when I asked for insights into how they viewed their relationship with their fellow pupils.

Despite these school-level positive changes, there were some relational challenges. Both headteachers concurred that some teachers still do not cooperate adequately to implement the schools' LfL-induced beliefs stated in chapter 8. For example, both schools were struggling with the canker of teacher grapevines and peddling of lies about one another. Some teachers also felt the headteachers were too rigid in their interpretation of GES rules. I must state that upon careful investigation of this allegation, I discovered that the rigidity was linked solely to the headteachers' uncompromising stance on not approving teachers to charge parents more than the fee approved by GES for extra tuition. Some teachers including the headteachers also acknowledged that they continued to struggle to get all the pupils to respond to the learning activities.

Pupils from both schools especially AS5, BS5 and BS10 thought some teachers were lazy, boring, and only talked to themselves without engaging them. The biggest concern pupils from both schools expressed when I asked them to tell me what they think their schools could improve upon was caning. "Canism"<sup>13</sup> as AS5 called it, was something the pupils did not appreciate.

## **Outside school**

### *School-others*

The school-others relationships were given quality attention by the headteachers, teachers and pupils because they aligned with the philosophy of leaving no one behind. There was a general view among stakeholders of both schools that the schools' relationship with others tremendously improved. Recounting their experiences, two parents – AP3 and BP5 described the once poor and disappointing school-parent/community relationship as a turn around. In resonance with these parents, the APTA-chair and teachers AT3 and BT6 all of whom had about 15 years of experience in their respective schools said the previous school-parent/community relationships had been scandalous, marked by indiscipline, disrespect and

---

<sup>13</sup> Canism as AS5 explained denoted flogging which some teachers used as a means of correcting pupils.



lack of commitment. As the APTA-chair recalled: “I still remember an incident when a parent told a teacher that she was worthless, and the teacher replied by describing the parent as a useless witch”.

However, the interview conversations with stakeholders, minutes of PTA meetings and my observations suggested a move from non-cooperation to collaboration. Teachers, parents and pupils converged on the view that parents could now enter the school to share their expertise as masons, carpenters, and retired teachers including during the classroom activities. One example I can cite, based on my observations, to corroborate these claims was the occasional attendance of classroom lessons by the PTA and SMC chairs of both schools. Parents and teachers also exchanged mobile numbers to enable easy access to each other to discuss pupils’ progress (AT4 & BT8). These relational dynamics were driven by the new understanding that teachers and parents were co-partners in pupils’ development.

The two headteachers acknowledged the improvement in school-parent collaboration but pointed out that there was still room for improvement. The BHT was particularly pleased with the strides already made but stressed her frustration at the infidelity of many parents to fulfil their financial commitment towards mutually agreed school developmental projects. The scale of school-parent partnership differed between the two schools. As I indicated in chapter five, school B had a larger proportion of educated parents than school A and thus, enjoyed better parental cooperation. The lack of parental cooperation was a reality that AHT and most of his teachers referred to as the biggest obstacle to implementing the LfL principles. “You call PTA meetings, but out of over 325 parents, you can’t even form a quorum. Those who come, are late and when they come, it is to tell teachers that they are not doing their work well” (AHT). One of the parents (AP3) concurred with the headteacher’s claims stating that some of her fellow parents, especially the illiterate fisherfolks were not cooperating well with the school. But the minutes of the PTA meeting (12/10/2010) showed that some parents appreciated the work of the teachers and defended them in the wake of such attacks.

Both schools have however, made good strides in building formidable relationships with their alumni. Through the efforts of the headteachers and teachers, it was now almost part of the schools’ ethos for the alumni, especially those who experienced the LfL ideals to return to their schools twice every school term to share their experiences with the pupils. An additional dynamic I observed in school B was that graduating year groups and alumni donated gifts like benches to the school or adopted and repainted a classroom block. The fraction of a



classroom wall and the inscription on it below is an example, and this symbolises the level of maturity and care of the pupils, and the strong bond they maintain with the school.



**Figure 9.4 A picture showing a building renovated by alumni**

### **Pupils' integral growth**

Analysis of the collated all source data clearly indicated that pupils were growing holistically. Most of the stakeholders especially teachers and circuit supervisors, described the pupils' integral growth as phenomenal. The phrase integral or holistic growth was first used by the headteachers and teachers to describe positive signs of change in pupils' interest in learning and self-efficacy, learning outcomes, communication, and character. Before I present participants' views on these realities, it is important to clarify that, it was my intention to analyse the performance of alumni of the schools in standardised examinations like the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), which is used to promote pupils to senior high schools, before and after the introduction of the LfL principles. This would have enabled me to gauge the trend of the academic progress in the schools. However, this was not possible because such records were unavailable to the schools. Although the headteachers, teachers, and circuit supervisors of both schools claimed that the schools improved in academic performance, I could not substantiate the claims with documentary evidence, and thus, preferred to exclude such claims.

### *Interest in learning and self-efficacy*

In the first two interviews with the headteachers, I understood that every pupil in both schools knew that focusing on their learning was the surest way to achieve their aspirations. Both headteachers advised that if I arrived at the schools earlier, *say* 6.00 am each day, I could observe for myself the drive pupils had for learning. To this end, I arrived at the schools earlier, and observed and talked to pupils both formally and informally. As one of the pupils in Basic Nine who was reading her notes said: “I love learning because if I don’t learn how can I succeed in life to help my parents?” This idea of owning their learning and expression of confidence were reiterated by most of the pupils during the FGDs, confirming teacher AT1’s claim that teachers have aroused in the pupils, an interest for learning.

### *Communication*

One other area parents and teachers commended as an improvement in the pupils was their readiness to communicate with parents their experiences from school. Teachers from both schools especially AT9 and BT8 emphasised that communication between some parents and their wards has improved. “When I listen to parents, I have no doubt that the pupils take the good news of learning home. When they go home their parents ask them: what did you learn from school today? they respond substantially with confidence” (BT8). This claim was supported by parents AP2 and BP3 who expressed joy in their children’s willingness to share their experiences from school including what they learnt, things they liked and disliked. In addition, AP1 and BP4 shared that once their children arrived home, the first thing they did after eating was to share what happened at school, show their exercises and homework. I found that AP1 and BP4 were single parents who run self-managed businesses at home. It implies that these parents were available to their children.

There were equally substantial claims from some pupils especially those of fisherfolks parentage that they hardly had access to their parents who were mostly in the Ocean or at the market. BS9’s views captured those of the majority of his classmates: “I sometimes feel like I have no parents because both of our parents are hardly available, and I have to do all the house chores”.

### *Character – discipline, self-awareness, and neatness*

Good character, exemplified by pupils’ discipline, self-awareness and neatness was considered by most of the participants especially teachers as having improved remarkably. At the time of my research, different stakeholders acknowledged, in some cases with visible

expression of joy the remarkable progress in pupils' discipline. Most participants from both schools especially the headteachers and teachers referred to the pupils' regular attendance and punctuality, attentiveness in class, decorum and respect for teachers and colleagues as the significant signs of the improved level of discipline. Evidence from the analysis of the class attendance registers of Basics Six and Nine pupils (my research targets) for eight school terms – from 2015 to second term of 2017 showed very good pupil attendance in both schools. For example, over the 8 terms, an average of 89 per cent of Basic Six and 88 per cent of Basic Nine pupils of school A, and 94 per cent of Basic Six and 89 per cent of Basic Nine pupils of school B were regular. When I shared these figures with the headteachers, they said that the pupils' regular attendance was an improvement over the previous years because the schools had become homelier. Similarly my school-wide, as well as classroom level observations, showed that pupils were mostly well behaved except for a few instances where some pupils were punished for being late to school.

Closely linked to discipline were growth in self-awareness and neatness. As parents including AP2 and BP3 and teachers AT6 and BT8 emphasised throughout the interviews, most of the pupils had really matured in self-awareness and sensitivity to happenings around them. The essay in appendix 4 by the 11-year-old BS2, a Basic Six boy which was inspired by his witnessing a gory accident on his way to school exemplifies the good level of self-awareness of the pupils. No wonder teacher BT3 stated: "It has been a real joy to watch these children mature in self-awareness. It changed everything for good: their neatness, sensitivity to things and behaviours towards us and their parents". Teacher BT8 and ASMC-chair said that the pupils' discipline and self-awareness transcended the school walls because they were known among other schools in the metropolis as being disciplined, hardworking, respectful, and well behaved.

Even though the baseline view by most of the stakeholders of both schools pointed to an appreciable holistic development of the pupils, teachers and some of the other stakeholders acknowledged there were also some challenges to surmount and many of these were quite normally associated with the transition to adolescence.

## **Summary**

This chapter reported the resultant impacts of practising the LfL-induced beliefs. Through intra-school collaborative efforts among headteachers, teachers and pupils, and with other stakeholders outside of the school, different aspects of school life have been positively impacted. Regarding the stakeholders, the data revealed signs of attitudinal changes, and

pupils' holistic growth relating to character, self-awareness, self-efficacy, curiosity, and enthusiasm for learning. Improvements in interpersonal relationships and physical infrastructure were also shared by participants.

These developments were gauged against the previous experiences of lack of commitment, cooperation, and unsafe physical and socio-emotional environments which negatively affected teaching and learning in the schools. Nevertheless, as indicated severally in this chapter, there were instances which showed the need for further improvements. In the next chapter, I consider the opportunities and threats to the most successful implementation of the LfL ideals, and their sustainability.

## **Chapter 10. Opportunities and threats to the LfL incorporation**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I present the opportunities and threats to the effective incorporation and sustainability of the Leadership for Learning principles. Put differently, the chapter reports the factors which have promoted or inhibited the inculcation process. Divided into two main sections, the first section considers the opportunities and the second considers the challenges.

### **Opportunities seized**

Analysis of all source data revealed a whole array of prevailing opportunities which the stakeholders, especially the headteachers, seized to promote the agenda of incorporating the LfL principles. These include the presence of some basic physical facilities such as classrooms, furniture, textbooks and lesson notebooks. However, the most significant and encompassing opportunities, were within the availability of motivated, competent and committed teachers who were yearning for positive change. I must state outright that some of the impacts which resulted from the effective maximisation of these opportunities, for example, cordial interpersonal relationships, and improvement in pupils' growth themselves became opportunities over time creating a virtuous cycle of the incorporation process.

#### **Availability of motivated individuals with good conscience yearning for change**

The two headteachers talked about relying on motivated individual stakeholders – teachers, pupils, and parents who collaborated to improve the schools. As stakeholders talked about the impacts of the new initiatives, I asked: 'What would you say were/are the most important factors which enabled such changes?' There was resonance among teachers, pupils, parents and the headteachers' responses that the presence of motivated individuals was key.

Beaming with smiles, headteacher AHT stated that the intrinsic motivation of five of the 22 teachers, some pupils, the PTA and SMC chairs, and their drive for the transformation of the school underpinned the success story of school A. When I sought clarification on what 'intrinsic motivation' denoted, he explained:

I have five teachers whom as soon as I shared my ideas from the LfL workshops, said to me, 'let's start implementing these wonderful ideas, and others will follow gradually'. These people generously disposed their time, resources, energy to ensure the school is transformed into an environment

where everyone feels at home to be, to relate, to teach and to learn. They did this not for external rewards but as part of their internal drive for a system that works well.

The headteacher referred to this availability and collaborative spirit as a vivid expression of inner motivation because like him, these teachers occasionally faced opposition from colleagues, pupils and parents, yet they remained resilient. His counterpart, BHT added that she was extra blessed because more than half of the 256 parents of her school readily welcomed the LfL-informed transformative agenda she introduced.

Both headteachers and some teachers like AT2 and BT8 also acknowledged the crucial role the motivation of alumni, who benefitted from the LfL, and current pupils played in promoting the incorporation of the LfL values.

Pupils from both schools concurred that some teachers and pupils were intrinsically motivated. It was common to hear pupils in both schools refer to some of their classmates or alumni as their models. Joe (synonym), an alumnus of school A who completed only in 2015 and gained admission into one of the prestigious senior high schools, was an example of such inspiration for the pupils. I met Joe and three other alumni twice when they visited their alma mater. In chatting with Joe, I realised he remained grateful to the school for inculcating in him values of hard work, resilience, and collaboration, which inspired his continued return to the school to share his experiences with the pupils. Teacher AT6 who was Joe's 'school-level parent' (explained in chapter 8) claimed that the drive for group work among pupils and the willingness to stay back for a few hours after school to learn was inspired by that boy.

From my daily observations of life in the two schools, the claims about availability of motivated teachers, pupils and parents, and their role in enkindling in others the fires of collaboration, teamwork, hard work and resilience could not be disputed. In analysing random sample of exercise books of Basic Six and Nine pupils, I gauged the scale of enthusiasm for learning. I noticed some pupils in each school who did all their homework and consistently performed well. Enthused by this, I talked to some of them to gain insights into the processes which informed their excellent performances, and one of the Basic Six boys (BS2) pulled out a book from his bag which he titled 'My own research' and gave it to me. Perusing this book, I was awestruck by the amount of notes this boy had made from his own reading of the Junior Graphic Newspaper and viewing of Television programmes. According to him, he was motivated by the school's mantra that they could do it, that is, they could achieve the professions they aspired to through hard work, creativity, and resilience. Thus, the availability of such motivated members of the schools was and continues to be an

opportunity which inspired the incorporation of the LfL principles including focus on learning. The availability of competent and committed staff was another important factor.

### **Availability of competent and committed teachers**

The competence and commitment of every stakeholder was crucial for all the participants as the mantra ‘leave no one behind’ in chapter 8 clearly showed. However, teacher<sup>14</sup> competence and commitment were roundly appreciated as fundamental in initiating and influencing change within and outside the walls of the schools. The meaning attached to the usage of these concepts by stakeholders was not the same, yet it was key to a proper understanding of what ‘availability of competent and committed teachers’ meant. The interviews, FGDs, observations – planned and opportunistic, and analysis of documents provided methodological research sources through which I gauged teacher competence and commitment as opportunities for incorporating the LfL values.

As the analysis of the interviews portrayed, the headteachers, teachers, and circuit supervisors of the research schools perceived competence similarly, linking it to their academic or professional qualifications, mastery of subject matter, confidence, agency or self-efficacy. In seeking the participants’ insights into the processes which were crucial to the improvements in both schools, the circuit supervisors of both schools told me that their schools were atypical because they had an adequate supply of teachers who were well qualified professionally and commanded high-level mastery of their subject knowledge and pedagogy. As highlighted in chapter 8, the views of the teachers and their heads resonated with the CSs, with teachers like AT1 and BT7 indicating that the least qualifications of their colleagues were first degrees in basic education. During the teacher FGDs when the question of teachers being agents of change was discussed, most teachers linked their role as agents of change to their professional knowledge, confidence and self-efficacy.

Pupils and parents of both schools readily confirmed the confidence and agency of teachers in the transformative activities of the school ranging from teaching to leading. However, most of them understood teacher competence based on the quality of teaching in the classroom. When I probed pupils during the interviews to justify why they referred to their teachers as competent, about 99 per cent of them said the teachers were competent because they taught to their [pupils’] understanding. For pupils like AS5 and BS10, teaching to their understanding meant that the teachers explained topics well, allowed questions, were

---

<sup>14</sup> The word teacher is used in this particular context to denote both teachers and the headteacher

enthusiastic and committed, and varied the methods of teaching. These views with which other pupils concurred were shared by many parents who, based on their observation of the growth in their children, confirmed the teachers were teaching the children well.

Regarding teacher commitment, all the stakeholders seemed to converge, connecting it to the fidelity of teachers and their availability to duty. When the BHT remarked that “my teachers’ commitment has been next [sic.] to none...”, I inquired for insights into what commitment specifically entailed. Like headteacher AHT and some teachers who responded to a similar question, she stated that commitment was about regularity and punctuality, enthusiasm, trust, and readiness to embrace change. For AHT: “Commitment is about the readiness of stakeholders to sacrifice something for the common good of the school”, a characteristic, which teachers of both schools exhibited. Most parents and pupils associated commitment with the care, love, and the support teachers rendered to the pupils. Therefore, when the stakeholders talked about availability of competent teachers, they were referring variously to the presence of teachers who were professionally well qualified showing great mastery of their subject areas, pedagogical adaptations, self-efficacy, and agency. Similarly, commitment denotes the availability of teachers who are dedicated, altruistic, caring, regular and punctual to duty.

These were practical indicators which my personal observations at the school and community corroborated. But, before then, I was interested in knowing the scale of teacher competence and commitment at the time of introducing the LfL principles, and if there was any relation with the intrinsic motivation mentioned earlier. Both headteachers agreed that in terms of qualification, every teacher already had a professional certificate for teaching. However, through mutual encouragement most of them upgraded to Masters degrees. Headteachers AHT and BHT emphasised that teachers who developed their competence showed more confidence and enthusiasm towards the LfL’s philosophy of teaching such as critical engagement and openness to pupils’ views.

During the classroom lesson observations in both schools, I specifically observed among other attributes, teacher competence and commitment, their professionalism, presentation of teaching and learning activities, and subject mastery. Regarding the professionalism, the focus was on whether the teacher was relaxed, demonstrated a real strong predilection for teaching and learning, dressed neatly and decently, and served as a role model for the pupils. The sequential and logical way the teacher organised the teaching and learning activities, varied teaching pedagogy including demonstration, discussions, use of real world examples, and the promotion of critical thinking were observed to gauge the teacher’s competence in



lesson presentation. In observing teachers' mastery of subject, I emphasised their ability to solve problems and represent concepts in multiple ways. My analysis of the observational data showed that most teachers exhibited these qualities confirming the claims of the participants.

Similarly, analysis of the observation data revealed a remarkable level of teacher commitment. At the classroom level, teachers' regular attendance and punctuality, their enthusiasm and disposition towards lessons which were used to gauge their commitment were tellingly impressive. For the lessons which I observed in both schools, most of the teachers were present and arrived in class in or on time to start lessons. Teachers in both schools showed great interest in the teaching and learning activities, made efforts to engage and maintain the interest of the pupils – the high, medium, low attainers, and introverts and extroverts throughout the lesson. It was easy to observe the high level of teachers' familiarity with the pupils, calling them by their names, and exhibiting fairness, firmness, positive attitude, and receptivity to pupils' views. The good teacher-pupil familiarity was atypical and may have resulted from the school-level parenting or be each other's keepers initiatives.

The outstanding commitment of teachers transcended the school-level to include the role they played at the community-level. Apart from the love, care, and other forms of support which pupils and parents said teachers rendered, my opportunistic observations at the community-level confirmed these claims. Not only did I spot teachers driving pupils from the streets at night to go home and learn, but also witnessed teachers organise free extra tuition for pupils residing in the same community as them. These pieces of evidence confirm why teacher competence and commitment were a crucial factor that promoted the LfL-driven innovation in both schools. It not only directly helped to get pupils to focus on their learning, but also contributed to cordial interpersonal relationships.

### **Cordial interpersonal relationships**

As I clarified in chapter 8, interpersonal relationships at both schools at the initial stages of introducing the LfL principles were appalling and marked by stakeholders saying unprintable words to one another. However, in my follow up series of informal conversations especially with the headteachers and the form teachers, I understood that despite the poor initial relational dynamics, there was a desire among some teachers and parents for cordial relationships. This desire was an opportunity headteacher BHT grabbed and through her own transparent, fair and trustworthy nature in relating to everyone, she became a medium of reconciliation. Headteacher AHT corroborated as follows: "If you ask me for the current

single factor that is positively influencing the pupils' learning, dialogue, sharing of leadership and accountability, I will say, it is the cordial interpersonal relationships within the school". As teachers like AT7 and BT5 and some pupils (AS7, BS4) concurred, the improvement in interpersonal relationships positively influenced everything – co-agency, commitment, cooperation, collaboration, and creativity. Connecting their experience of being critical friends (clarified in chapter 8) of the schools, both circuit supervisors indicated that when relationships were not good in the schools, there was no trust at all, and so even with the best intentions when they critiqued teachers, they reacted negatively. However, the CSs were now able to play their role as critical friends with great success because teachers themselves were already practising mutual peer-review, challenge and support. Thus, cordial interpersonal relationships among stakeholders which were both a cause and effect of a successful incorporation of the ideals of the LfL principles remained a crucial tool for continued deeper actualisation of the values of the principles.

At the teachers and pupils' FGDs, discussants corroborated the important role cordial relationships played in good information flow, development of interpersonal knowledge, commitment, and pupils' integral growth. As many pupils, teachers, and parents stated, most of the pupils preferred to be in school rather than at home because the school was safe, peaceful, and supportive. While acknowledging this, some teachers of both schools including AT9, BT4 and BT5 remarked that their drive to improve the school was inspired by the impacts their efforts were making. "When we see signs of improvements from our efforts especially in the pupils' learning outcomes, everyone is happy and motivated to do more, to share ideas, sacrifice and support" (BT5).

These notwithstanding, there were challenges in both schools, which threatened and continue to threaten the most effective incorporation of the LfL principles and their sustainability. Axiomatic of a developing country like Ghana, the challenges abounded, and ranged from socio-economic, and cultural to political spheres.

## **Challenges faced**

Evidence from the multi-sourced data suggested that the factors which inhibited the LfL incorporation occurred at four levels. Perhaps, the best image to describe these levels is a tree where the roots, trunk, leaves, and fruits illustrate each level. The evidence showed that the deep-seated root level causes beget the challenges shown on the trunk which in turn influence the challenges at the level of the leaves, and the final signs or outcomes, the fruits. It was

therefore, important for me to pay attention to this reality and trace the deep-rooted factors which made it difficult for all stakeholders to get onboard with the LfL-inspired school improvement innovation. Careful analysis of the data revealed challenges to be the difficult socio-cultural and economic backgrounds of pupils and parents; ubiquity of youth unemployment, fatalism in social mobility, and modern technology and media programmes.

### **Challenging socio-cultural and economic background of parents and pupils**

This broad theme was carved out of the data and personal experiences to reveal the kind of socio-cultural and economic environment which informed the experiences, worldviews, and attitudes of parents and pupils towards education. As the data clearly showed most of the parents and pupils were from urban fishing slums characterised by high levels of illiteracy, poverty, inadequate housing, broken families, the phenomena of house-helps and domestic slavery, instantism and consumerism<sup>15</sup>, defilements, sodomy, unemployment and underemployment, freelance celebrations, violence, and survival of the fittest. Most of the illiterate parents, according to parent AP3, and teacher AT1, did not appreciate the importance of formal education. “They just feel that people are sending their children to school, so they should also do the same and that if the child gets to a point where he or she cannot continue they can drop out of school” (AT1). In other words:

They operate a culture that makes you wonder if they are from a parallel universe. Majority of parents have little regard for formal education and only see the school as a space to keep their children so that they can have freedom to do whatever they like (AHT).

The headteacher further explained that these challenges and their accompanying effects were brought into school by parents and pupils. Thus, initially it was difficult to implement the LfL ideals such as getting pupils to focus on learning in school and at home and building the capacity of parents through dialogue and collaboration and sharing leadership and accountability.

---

<sup>15</sup> The concept of ‘house-helps’ is a common phenomenon in Ghana. It is a practice where more financially stable relatives or members of a community bring girls from poor illiterate rural homes to their homes in towns or cities to help with house chores in exchange for enrolment in formal education or learning of a trade. But as my research participants shared, these girls are often turned into domestic slaves who are overworked and deprived of food and other basic needs to be healthy to learn, with some of them being subjected to physical and sexual abuse by their hosts. ‘Instantism’ represents a prevailing belief in Ghanaian society of quick fixes or successes in life. Consumerism is the belief that the more the material possessions, the more fulfilled and respected one is.

There was consistency of views among participants on the inhibiting role household poverty was playing in schools' improvement efforts. Many teachers from both schools and the circuit supervisors who perceived poverty as both illiteracy and an inability to meet basic needs such as housing, food and health, considered it as being the cause of lack of parental cooperation and support for children's learning. Teachers like AT3 and BT4 cited instances where some parents told teachers lies to justify their children's wrong behaviour especially when they intended them to run errands for them such as selling goods.

As AHT and some teachers from both schools who occasionally went out at night to the suburbs also observed, most of the pupils slept on the streets and verandas of shops because of inadequate housing and domestic violence. Teacher AT4, one of the class teachers whom I spoke to many times said that most of the pupils belong to large families of about eight often making do with one small room. As she added, they witnessed and experienced all sorts of violence which their fathers mete out to their mothers so the children sometimes found it better to sleep outside of the home. Most of these children, as teachers (AT6, BT7) explained, came to school on empty stomachs, tired, traumatised and absent-minded. The magnitude of the trauma, according to the BPTA-chair was worse for house-helpers who had to pay through hard labour, sometimes deep into the night for every aspect of support – housing, food, and clothing they get from their so-called uncles, aunts or adopted parents. He explained:

The children go through a lot, hawking for hours and in some cases, they are not allowed to return home until they sell all the items. Yet, they have very little food to eat. As for the house-helpers, woe to them if they misplace even a pencil!

As some pupils from both schools recounted, these challenges were real and inhibited their efforts to cooperate with the headteachers and teachers who were doing everything to help them to develop into holistic and successful citizens. AS3 averred: "Like me, many pupils prefer to spend more time in school because the violence, pain, and discouragements at home are just too much". Perhaps, the most striking of all the conversations came from one of the illiterate parents (AP6) who frankly told me that the only way to survive as a family was to get her children to sell items after school to augment the family's income. Thus, she always would ensure that the time in school was for learning and the time after school was for house chores and selling items.

Apart from these challenges, teachers and the headteachers hinted at school-level challenges regarding cooperation. Both headteachers stated that just as there were motivated teachers who embraced the LfL-inspired transformation agenda, there were equally laggards

among the teachers who were comfortable with the status quo. “Some teachers held on to their long-held beliefs about teaching, learning, and leading. Others were indifferent and did not care about any change initiatives. But with time they gradually embraced the wave of change” (BHT).

An interesting insight was however, made by some teachers and pupils when I probed to know why they would not want to trust others or be transparent to them. They stated that past experiences of betrayal of trust from close friends and relatives like parents, husbands or wives made some people unable to trust anyone (AS7 & BT6). Pupil AS3 also shared that the challenge may come from the family ethos because in her home, children were not allowed to contribute whenever their parents were discussing anything, so in school she found it difficult to ask her teachers questions or offer her opinions on issues. This was something teacher AT6 had earlier referred to as the ‘culture of silenced socialisation’ but her counterpart from school B said what people may perceive as lack of cooperation for dialogue and accountability may have been a mere reality of introversion (BT5). However, as teachers AT9 and BT3 observed, some teachers exhibited their lack of cooperation through the ‘I know it all attitude’. These school-level examples of lack of cooperation, and the different kinds of poverty related challenges were spotted in some parts of the minutes of PTA and staff minutes over the years. But what stood out as the main challenge was poverty and all its associated inhibitory effects on the most effective incorporation and sustenance of the LfL ideals. Related to poverty is youth unemployment.

### **Ubiquity of youth unemployment and fatalistic attitude towards social mobility**

The issue of high-level youth unemployment including school graduates, as stakeholders like ASMC-chair, parents and teachers noted, was discouraging some pupils and parents from investing resources in education. Pupils including AS7 and BS1 averred that they were going through so much peer-pressure because there were many youths who completed secondary school and, in some cases, tertiary institutions but had no job to do. So, on several occasions on their way to school, some youths and adults directed at them sarcastic comments like ‘what are you going to school for? After all, when you finish you will come back to sell on the streets’. An intriguing experience AS10 shared was that because of lack of space and electricity at home, she used the street lights in the town to study in the evenings, and one man accused her of being a witch. This kind of attitude was readily supported by some parents of school A whom I informally engaged in a conversation after one of the PTA meetings. One of them was fuming distressfully:

Why should I continue to invest in the education of my other children when the first one who completed university is jobless? We send our children to school so that when they finish, they will make the family life better and not be a burden.

When I sought the opinions of the headteachers and some of the teachers, they concurred with the parent's frustration even though they argued that the benefits of education were more than getting a job. However, these stakeholders acknowledged that the unemployed youth were becoming fatalistic about their chances of social mobility, and this was affecting the pupils who live, see, and interact with some of them.

In teasing out some ideas from the pupils during the FGDs concerning youth unemployment and how it was affecting their interest in learning, I asked the pupils if there was any major thing in society that discouraged their drive for formal education, especially learning. I discovered that many of them referred to the uncertainty of employment. "I keep trying to encourage myself to learn hard, but I don't know if I will get a job after school" (AS2). Teachers AT9 and BT2, while agreeing with everyone about the rising levels of youth unemployment, attributed the problem to lack of quality education. "Why should you be worrying about jobs if you are assured of quality education that will equip your head with knowledge, heart with character and hands with skills?" (AT9) The baseline in these submissions is that the rising unemployment and hopelessness among the youth was a challenge to pupils' inspiration to focus on learning in and outside the walls of the schools.

### **Prevailing communications' technology**

In analysing the interviews, FGDs, and minutes of PTA and staff meetings of both schools, I realised that modern technology provided opportunities as well as challenges to the enculturation of the LfL principles. But, citing mobile phones, telenovelas, computer games and sports betting centres, and local information centres as examples of modern technology, stakeholders thought they hindered more than improved the efforts to inculcate the principles.

#### *Mobile phones and social media*

Mobile phones, according to most of the participants, were ubiquitous and had some positive influence on learning. Teachers and pupils averred during the interviews and FGDs that the social media packages on their phones enabled them to engage in dialogue, do peer-review, share ideas with friends from other schools, and learn new things. Some pupils stated

that they used the Internet on their parents' mobile phones to search for relevant information to do assignments, learn new scientific terms, and improve their vocabularies (AS5, BS11).

However, teachers and pupils resonated that the ubiquity, affordability and ease of access to these facilities made pupils addicted to chatting for long hours, for example, 5-6 hours a day, on issues which were not necessarily linked to their learning (AT4, BS3). Pupils AS5 and BS3 acknowledged that they were spending too much time Facebook and WhatsApp to the detriment of their learning. One of the pupils whose view largely captured those of many of his colleagues in both schools said:

The thing is addictive. Once you start to chat with friends, you can be doing so with three or four friends on different media platforms like WhatsApp or Facebook and you just keep going. Later you realise you have spent the whole evening chatting. After that you become so tired that you can't learn (AS5).

For BS10 her struggle was over the fact that the contents of the chats were often not directly related to generation of knowledge relevant to her academic aspirations but tended to be erotic.

### *Telenovelas*

Soap operas or telenovelas as they are popularly called in Ghana were also noted for their double-edged role in the LfL incorporation. Most of the pupils including AS7 and BS10 said that the telenovelas helped them to broaden their scope of thinking and worldviews because they enabled them to learn things about other cultures. Linking one of the telenovelas – 'Simple Maria' to a concrete life of Ghanaian girls, AS7, a Basic Nine girl, said that it provides a moral lesson of how to work and behave well in life including avoiding early marriage. Her classmates (AS11, BS3) and some teachers (AT3, BT5) stressed that the English telenovelas helped the pupils to improve their literacy, vocabulary, and the art of speaking and narration. When I raised the reality of telenovelas during the teachers' and pupils' FGDs, the benefits above were reiterated but one pupil added that watching some of the telenovelas taught her how to handle difficult situations maturely, cooperate with others, and treat other people with respect.

These positives notwithstanding, evidence from the analysis of the interviews, FGDs, and personal opportunistic observations on the streets of the communities showed that the following challenges were associated with telenovelas: time consuming, addiction, noise, family tensions, cultural confusion, and immoral behaviours. During the teachers' FGDs,

teachers AT9 and BT6 were categorical that the emergence of telenovelas was a very serious issue that was causing havoc with family bonds and pupils' learning.

The telenovelas were numerous and were shown in series throughout the day, week, and year, and usually at prime time between 5 to 9 pm when pupils were expected to be resting, learning or getting ready for bed (AT6 & BT7). These programmes, as my observations testified, were ubiquitous but what largely got many parents and pupils attracted and addicted was that despite the characters being foreigners, the language was translated into the most commonly spoken local language – *twi*. Taking *Kukum Bhagya* as an example, teacher BT3 said that this Indian telenovela which translated as 'The destiny of love' was the most watched programme because it had Indian characters speaking *twi*. This fascinated and gratified pupils and parents, especially the illiterates, with some becoming addicted to it. Thus, as teachers (AT3, BT4) explained, whenever it was about to be shown, usually from 7.30 to 8.30pm, parents would call their children to join them: "Eii, *Kukum Bhagya* is about to start. Hurry up! Be fast" (BT4). Views of nearly all the pupils I spoke with, formally and informally, reflected those of the teachers. BS10, a Basic Nine girl revealed that she spent about four hours each day during the week and seven hours at weekends watching these programmes and it was affecting her academic performance.

As teachers and pupils elucidated, viewers of these programmes easily become addicted to them and that causes a lot of problems including noise distraction and rendered parents unavailable to support their children's learning needs at home. A Basic Six boy, AS1 said telenovelas were tearing his family apart and making home really unconducive for learning. For his colleague BS6, it was the loud noise coming from her parents and the television during viewing of the telenovelas which made it difficult to concentrate on learning. When I asked teacher AT9 why he was so negative about telenovelas, he cited these same reasons and then described telenovelas as dangerous to the delivery of quality education.

In the words of pupils AS7 and BS11, some of the telenovelas were littered with romantic scenes and vulgar language which sometimes became topics for pupils' conversations during school hours. In some cases, as pupil BS11 and teacher AT4 observed, some pupils wanted to practise the vulgar language. This observation resonated with a claim made by teacher AT3 that the telenovelas were the means of transposing foreign cultures onto the local cultures which was not only a process of cultural colonisation but caused cultural confusion in the minds of the pupils. "In our culture, a child ordinarily, cannot tell the mother, 'oh mummy, excuse me, snub you' but they are doing it now because they watch that in the telenovelas"



(AT3). It was within these dynamics that telenovelas were perceived as being detrimental to incorporation of the LfL principles.

#### *Local community information centres*

The community information centres are often small kiosks or wooden structures attached to which are high metal poles with two or three megaphones mounted on them. The image below which I photographed, is an example of a local information centre.



**Figure 10.1 A picture showing a local information centre**

They are common in the coastal slums and were originally introduced by communities as a cheap means to disseminate information in the local language on happenings in Ghana and beyond. As teacher AT9 noted, the traditional approach of drumming the local drum – ‘gongon’ to announce events was no longer practicable because of population explosion so these centres helped to achieve this goal.

However, the participants – headteachers, teachers, pupils, parents, and circuit supervisors roundly discredited these centres arguing that they deviated from their intended purpose. Rather, people turned them into centres for advertisements and announcements about locally made medicines, preaching, funerals, and playing loud music. Thus, they produced excessively penetrating noise throughout the day which made it extremely difficult for the pupils to learn. Except pupil AS7 who argued that the centres were a source of employment and should remain in operation, all the other participants proposed their ban.

### *Sports betting and computer games centres*

The pictures below – mybet.com and soccerbet, exemplify the numerous and variedly nomenclatured sports betting centres.



**Figure 10.2 Pictures showing sports betting centres**

Some stakeholders stated that these centres are spaces of socialisation, entertainment, and sources of knowledge. Teacher AT4 argued that after a long stressful day in school, the children go to these centres to play, socialise, make friends, and entertain themselves which is part of the holistic approach to learning and growth. Concurring with their teachers, pupils BS3 and BS10 added that the games helped to eliminate boredom, refresh their brains and lift their spirits. Apart from these, teachers AT9 and BT3 emphasised that many pupils had no access to computers at home so the games centres provide a medium for pupils to get first hand practical experience of computers and their basic operations. Thus, the centres open the pupils to relevant knowledge.

Similarly, some teachers argued that the betting process in sports bets including Mybet, Eurobet, Safaribet, and Soccerbet, which were mostly about major sports like football and tennis, involved complicated processes of thinking which was helpful in sharpening the analytical skills and logical reasoning of the pupils. Based on that, as teachers AT2 and AT6 asserted, pupils' participation in betting could promote their learning.

These positives notwithstanding, most of the participants especially the headteachers and teachers considered them as counter productive to their efforts to develop a learning, dialogic, sharing and accountable culture in the schools. At the individual interviews and FGDs contexts when I sought participants' views on these centres, there was unanimity among teachers from both schools that these centres were frustrating their efforts to inculcate the LfL principles by promoting addiction, a culture of truancy, thievery, lies, quick fixes, and criminality among some of the pupils. Teachers AT2 and BT7 elucidated that the games and

betting activities encouraged pupils to steal from their parents. Another thing teacher BT2 observed was that the games and betting centres were often located near drinking spots where adults drank, smoked and romanced, so pupils were attracted to practise such things. Besides, as teachers AT4 and BT5 stated, because some of the pupils spend long hours in these centres they would not do their homework, and some reported to school late and tired. “They come to school, collect or steal their colleague's [sic.] book and copy the same answers for submission” (BT4). I realised during the pupils’ FGDs that nearly all the discussants shared views which confirmed everything their teachers said about the negative effects of the betting and computer games centres.

The consequences of these outside-school challenges were traceable to the lack of accountability of families, communities and the media (AHT and BHT). When I sought the opinions of teachers, pupils, circuit supervisors and parents about this claim, everyone agreed with the headteachers except parent AP5. He argued that families and communities were doing their best to support the learning of the children and thought successive governments were unaccountable for not providing what the schools needed for effective teaching and learning. However, pupils including AS2 and BS6 and teachers AT3 and BT2 who lived in the same community said that given their violent nature and the vulgar language they uttered, some parents and other adults in the community were bad examples for the pupils. Teacher AT1 said: “Whatever the adults do in the communities, they are the wrong things that we do not want the pupils to learn – the vulgar language, violence and greed!” For the headteachers and teachers these activities were counteractive to the very efforts they were making to improve pupils’ learning.

## **Summary**

In chapter 10, I have reported the opportunities which the practitioners of the LfL innovation seized and continue so to do, and the daily challenges they must mitigate to ensure its effective institutionalisation and sustainability. From the lens of opportunities, availability of motivated, competent and committed individuals yearning for positive change, and rootedness of cordial interpersonal relationships were the most outstanding opportunities. Contrarily, household poverty, youth unemployment, and impacts of modern technology constitute a major threat. In the next chapter, I identify the key findings embedded in the narratives from chapters 6 to 10 and put into dialogue with literature on leadership, learning, and school and system change implementation.

## Chapter 11. Discussion of the findings

“An unexamined life is not worth living” (Socrates in Plato’s *Apology*, 38a 5-6)

### Introduction

My main objective in this research has been to conduct a systematic, rigorous and reflexive investigation that contributes to empirically-informed insights into the processes of successful incorporation of the Leadership for Learning principles in two poor urban LfL basic schools in Ghana. The research, as clarified in chapter 2, was inspired by a justifiable national drive for quality education amidst consistently changing and vexing socio-cultural, economic and political realities. As the review of literature in chapter 3 clearly shows, scholars’ views resonated on the central role of quality leadership and learning in achieving quality education. This study has explored how the ideals of these crucially important concepts in their conjoined form as Leadership for Learning were successfully enculturated.

In this chapter, I examine the findings of my empirical research by putting them into dialogue with existing literature. But before that I summarise the key findings of the study. The summary includes how the findings were obtained because as Ritchie and Spencer (1994) remark, if decisions or actions are to be based on qualitative research, its audience must know how the findings have been obtained.

### Key findings of the research: summary and sources

In the preceding chapters – 6 to 10, the detailed narratives of the findings of this empirical research were articulated. In chapter 6, I related the intra-case processes of institutionalising the LfL principles. These include how structures and attitudes were created, re-created or re-oriented to get stakeholders to know, believe, teach and practise the principles. Despite daunting contextual challenges, each school seized the prevailing opportunities no matter how few, and annexed resilience and personal exemplarity to incorporate the principles. Unique as each school may be, from the lens of the phenomenon of the LfL principles which embeds the two cases into an embedded multiple case study (see chapter 4), the processes which undergird the success story of the two schools converged, a reality that warranted a cross-case narrative in chapters 7 to 10.

Regarding the participants’ understanding of the LfL principles presented in chapter 7, shared meaning emerged as the most easily discernible revelation. The data revealed that the participants converged in their perceptions of learning, dialogue, leadership and

accountability, the bedrock concepts of the LfL principles, linking them to activities which aim for the common good. The participants' view of the principles as a collective unit portrayed them as relational tools, reminders and revelations which enabled practices that engender desired changes in attitude toward professional commitment and learning. Based on the shared meanings about these concepts, the data indicate that participants, especially headteachers, teachers and pupils, were very familiar with the LfL principles – focus on learning, conditions for learning, learning dialogue, and sharing leadership and accountability.

In chapter 8, I found that the shared meaning participants held about the principles contributed to the building of communal beliefs which became concrete norms or references which guided leading and learning and relational activities in and outside the two schools. These beliefs were evident and clearly expressed in the resonated disposition among the stakeholders including headteachers, teachers, and pupils that they have the human, social, cultural and intellectual capital to improve their schools when they embraced a broader view of what constituted a school and carried everyone along on the improvement voyage. These beliefs became levers for individual and collective efficacy, co-agency, and spirit of subsidiarity and creativity for achieving the moral purpose of improving pupils' learning.

Concerning the resultant impacts of the institutionalisation of the LfL-inspired beliefs – narrated in chapter 9, attitudinal change emerged as a key impact. The data revealed it was at the root of all the improvements in the stakeholders' personal attitudes, professional development, commitment and collaboration, confidence to initiate change, and pupils' integral growth including improvement in learning outcomes.

As the LfL innovation was interpreted and practised in the two schools, I discovered that there were opportunities and challenges which promoted or inhibited the most effective implementation and sustainability of the initiative itself. Considered in detailed in chapter 10, I recognised the following three strands to the LfL story: first, availability of motivated, competent and exemplary teachers constituted a great opportunity for rooting the principles. Second, challenging socio-cultural and economic background of parents and pupils, and youth unemployment inhibited the incorporation of the principles. Third, prevailing technology functioned as a double-edged sword promoting and inhibiting the incorporation of the principles.

Reflecting on these findings, I have, guided by my research questions and objective, drawn six summary statements to discuss the findings. I should clarify that the key findings though largely drawn from the research data, were nourished by relevant literature, and

personal experiences. This was achieved by going beyond the data-embedded themes to identify further enriching themes that would reinforce the final formulation of the research themes as well as direct the discussions. This is a practice which, scholars like Becker (1958), and Coffey and Atkinson (1996) consider as helpful. As Coffey and Atkinson argue, “generation of ideas can never be dependent on the data alone” (p. 153). Personal experiences and observations play a crucial role in selecting and defining problems and concepts and constructing or incorporating findings into a coherent social system (Becker, 1958).

Additionally, scholars including Creswell (1994), Walford (2001), and Denscombe (2014) concur that it cannot be pretended that the experiences of qualitative researchers do not influence the process of extrapolating the research findings. This was exactly my experience as a qualitative researcher because I unavoidably played an active role throughout the research process regarding choices or decisions driven by personal experiences (Walford, 2001). Thus, I could not possibly distance myself from what eventually emerged as the research findings. This is a fact Denzin and Lincoln (1994) had earlier emphasised when they say that: “there is no value-free science” (p. 3). At the same time, I understand personal biases can be detrimental to the trustworthiness of research findings which is why existing literature, multi-sourced data, and the research questions were considered in drawing up the final key themes. They are:

- Participants were familiar with, and held shared perception about the LfL principles;
- re-orientating attitudes and re-creating structures inspired communal embrace of the principles;
- collaboration was a crucial lever for change implementation;
- motivation and cordial relationships can to some extent overcome paucity of infrastructure;
- household poverty, illiteracy and unemployment are threats to change implementation; and
- modern technology is both incentive and inhibitive to school improvement initiatives.

A table detailing each theme and its sources can be found in appendix 12. In what follows, I discuss these key themes.

## The key themes

### **Familiarity with and shared perception of the LfL principles**

#### *Stakeholders' familiarity with LfL principles*

In chapter 7 where the analysis of the data emphasises headteachers, teachers and pupils' perceptions of the LfL principles, it was apparent that these participants were familiar with them. This was expressed in various ways including teachers and pupils explicitly mentioning typical LfL sub-principles such as 'everyone being a learner, leader', and 'nurturing and celebration of everyone's talents' as explained in the key LfL textbook, *Connecting leadership and learning* edited by MacBeath and Dempster (2009).

This familiarity – close knowledge of or acquaintance with the principles, is a crucially important part of the LfL incorporation process because it determines the disposition towards, and acceptance and practice of, the principles. This reality is congruent with considerable quantum of change implementation literature including Gardner (2004) who says that the most important thing to do in changing people's minds is to connect to their reality or familiar space as the point of departure. This is a strategy the headteachers of the case study schools used to make their personal beliefs about the LfL principles become familiar and collectively owned. But, changing people's minds to embrace an innovation can be an uphill task unless they experience it because as Bate, Bevan, and Robert (2005) opine, people cannot want an innovation until they have tried it. In fact, Pfeffer and Sutton (2000) had earlier remarked that judgement about doing comes second to knowing or familiarity because it is the knowing that will motivate people to act, a worldview which Reeves (2006), and Fullan (2010) share. This implies that until people experience or understand an idea, they cannot form beliefs that will guide how they act on the idea. Thus, the strategy of creating spaces which facilitated and nourished stakeholder familiarity with the ideals of the LfL principles was apt in the incorporation process (Levin & Fullan, 2008) because such familiarity motivates shared meaning.

#### *Shared perception of learning and focus on learning*

The headteachers and most of the teachers and pupils consider learning as a progressive activity but literally all the participants perceived learning as the core business of the school that causes positive permanent change which empowers, improves and liberates them intellectually, morally, affectively, and economically. Thus, everyone is and must be a

learner. These views are consistent with much of current literature on the intricate concept of learning. Linking learning to a change in learners as its telos is an idea Illeris (2007) emphasises but the subtlety though lies in Illeris' overt exclusion of the word 'positive' and emphasis on permanent 'capacity' change. The more traditional and narrow view of learning as a method of knowledge acquisition which was expressed by pupil BS11 resonates with Liebling and Prior's (2005) conception of learning I explained in chapter 3. The presentation of learning by scholars such as Swaffield and MacBeath (2009); and Uhl-Bien and Marion (2011) as an activity that entails thinking about thinking and developing a learning identity resonates with the views of the majority of the research participants. Based on the above shared perception of learning, the participants perceived focus on learning as everyone owning or prioritising learning everywhere – an activity that is co-agential regarding the role of pupils, teachers, and parents.

*The common good as the telos of dialogue, leadership and accountability*

It was not only on learning that the participants' understanding converged. Dialogue, leadership and accountability received a similar trend. Despite the different semantic nuances in perceiving these concepts, the participants link them to the idea of the common good: dialogue as effective communication for the common good; leadership as an entrusted position for the common good; and accountability as stewardship, justice or stocktaking for the common good. The meaning of common good in my research context is connected to the idea of the welfare of all or the achievement of the schools' visions. Scholars who have reflected or written on common good are familiar with this slippery concept which is used in a variety of contexts. Perhaps the closest sense to school context in which pupils and teachers situate their understanding of common good is from Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) who equate the concept to better education of students. The headteachers' rather broader conception of common good is congruent with Crosby and Bryson (2005) who take it up in *Leadership for the common good* and describe common good as "an actual or potential mutual gain produced through careful stakeholder analysis and substantial involvement" (p.158). Similarly, and even in its broadest sense, the common good is linked to free markets and the plight of the poor, morality, fair wages, and the health of the environment and sustainable future of nations and the world (Daly & Cobb, 1994; Hume, 1996).



### *Shared understanding of dialogue and learning dialogue*

The presentation of dialogue in chapter 7 shows that participants conceive it as effective communication. While Fullan (2016) recently reiterates this belief, Levin and Pekar (2007), and Fullan (2007) had earlier converged that the nature of human interaction requires constant efforts to communicate effectively especially when some significant change from the status quo is being attempted.

The main stakeholders of my research – headteachers, teachers and pupils agree that trust, good demeanour and empathy are the life force of dialogue as effective communication. The data suggest that wherever there are people, there is dialogic interaction, and wherever there is interaction, there is learning. Thus, the LfL principle – learning dialogue is understood as relationship for learning. As Swaffield (2008) in her article which explores critical friendship, dialogue and learning discovers, dialogue is a very particular form of conversation involving the exchange of ideas and the search for shared meaning and common understanding. In other words, as my research reveals, dialogue is essentially about learning, a view which Watkins (2005, p. 120) had earlier emphasised when he describes dialogue as a sort of talk that is mostly closely “associated with rich learning, development of understanding and building of community”. It is about fusion of horizons of understandings (Gadamer, 1975) to advance human wellbeing, and I think this may have been the reason why my research participants stress trust, good demeanour and empathy as key to dialogue. Thus, as the research reveals dialogue is not only a string that binds the other principles into a symphonic whole but also inspires the shared view that school is the heart or melting point of individual, family and community experiences rather than an isolated physical space colonised by headteachers, teachers, and pupils. Seams of literature on school or system improvement (Chapman & Fullan, 2007; Barber, 2007; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009; & Fullan, 2016) favour such broad conceptualisation of spaces for schooling and collaboration.

But as the participants remark, the soul of these dialogic processes is enshrined in trust. This shared understanding is in sympathy with O’Neil’s (2002) submission on trust during The BBC Reith Lectures 2002 in Cambridge. Referring to one of Confucius’ teachings, O’Neil (p.3) says that “trust should be guarded to the end [because] without trust, we cannot stand”. This is extremely important for the expanded view of school because as Coleman (2012) believes, trust is a confidence in the integrity and abilities of another which serves as a basis for discretionary individual or collective action.

### *Converging view of leadership*

Leadership is another concept around which participants converged. Understood as a position of trust, the participants interpret leadership as a shared responsibility through which they combine talents to achieve the moral purposes of the schools. Although the view does not explicitly link the idea of influence to leadership, the phrase ‘combine talents...’ is consistent with Leithwood and Riehl's (2005) and Hallinger and Heck's (2010) perception of leadership as a mutually influenced process discussed in chapter 3. The view also confirms Day's (2011) claim that leadership is relational.

My research suggests that based on this perception, most of the participants prefer to link leadership to an activity to which people annex their talents rather than a fixed position set aside to be enjoyed by a heroic individual. This is consistent with Shields' (2010) argument that within the framework of LfL, shared leadership is about active mutual influence. The clarification that leadership as a ‘position of trust’ denotes a shared activity is important because it helps to avert what otherwise could have caused ideological collision between the traditional top-down trait and contemporary leadership theorists. Taken at face value, perceiving leadership as a position of trust has the propensity to imply exactly the stance of trait theorists – Bowden (1926) and Bingham (1927) who assume reductionistically that not everyone can exercise leadership; only those heroes with natural ability or who Harris (2009) calls the extraordinary individual – ‘the great man’. As Fitzgerald and Gunter (2008) observe, such a traditional view of leadership was only managerialism in a new guise. But the above clarification of leadership as an activity makes the participants' understanding of leadership more in tune with contemporary literature which talk more of shared leadership (Waterhouse & Moller, 2009) and distributed leadership (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2010). The inherent collaborative nature of shared or distributed leadership, according to Spillane (2006), allows for the distribution of responsibility. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) prefer to advertise the same idea through their transformational leadership, and Hallinger (2009), through instructional leadership.

In the Carpe Vitam's Leadership for Learning framework within which shared leadership is gauged in my research, it respects the hierarchical structure and the micropolitics of the schools (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009) with emphasis on mutual trust, dialogue and collective responsibility in leading and learning among headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents (Townsend, 2012). The idea of respect for micropolitics is an insight that seems to convey a similar spirit as the participants' view of a golf club as a fitting metaphor to describe leadership. This is because the metaphor is interpreted to portray leadership as a

contextually sensitive dynamic activity whose deployment must be based on the micro contextual and the unique needs of each stakeholder. But as MacBeath (2010) asserts, “when leadership is shared so is accountability” (p. 8).

### *Shared meaning of accountability and sharing accountability*

Given that accountability is often perceived in Ghana through the lens of financial transparency because of the canker of corruption, and in the case of schools, performance in standardised tests, I am surprised that the common meaning participants express about accountability presents it as fidelity to stewardship and availability to mutual stocktaking. The idea of stewardship in this context is connected to a caretaker who is faithful to entrusted responsibilities including provision of the basic needs of children, prioritising learning and teaching, being each other’s keepers, and contribution to making the school homely for all of these. As the data reveal accountability is a daily practice of availing the self for mutual stocktaking because of its connection to every activity of the schools and the stakeholders.

Interestingly, the branding of accountability as fidelity to stewardship is something that seems to be absent in literature on accountability. My reference to the UNESCO’s (2017) Global Education Monitoring Report, which is dedicated to accountability; MacBeath’s (2009) input on shared accountability, and Sackney and Michell’s (2009) submissions on accountability showed the absence of any explicit description of accountability as stewardship. However, the idea of linking accountability to mutual stocktaking and giving supportive feedback can be deduced in the works of the above authors. It resonates with what Elmore (2004) calls “reciprocity of accountability” which states that for every increment of performance I demand from you, I have an equal responsibility to provide you with the capacity to meet that expectation.

The data also show that apart from the common perception of accountability as faithful stewardship and mutual stocktaking, accountability is essentially relational and inevitably requires sharing of experiences relating to the leading, teaching and learning activities. This shared understanding resonates with Rhodes and Brundrett’s (2010) work, ‘Leadership for Learning’ in chapter 9 of *The principles of educational leadership and management* edited by Bush, Bell, and Middlewood that accountability is an activity that is marked by relationships between people who take actions and mutually appraise them.

It also emerges from the research that accountability is anchored on honest familiarity and interest in the other, trust and fairness or justice. This view seems quite novel but the notion that it is anchored on trust and fairness or justice seems to be consistent with observations

from MacBeath (2009) and more recently, the World Bank's (2017) report that the two mutually reinforcing pillars upon which accountability rests are answerability and enforceability. Answerability is the obligation of stewards to provide information about and justify their decisions and actions to others and enforceability represents the "attendant sanctions for failure to comply or deliver" (MacBeath, 2009, p. 138). However, answerability and enforceability may not necessarily be driven by principles of fairness and trust because of power asymmetry and the top-down approach to exercising external accountability. This does not seem to apply in the two schools as far as internal accountability is concerned but it is the case from outside the schools' walls where the media, community and some parents shift the accountability responsibility exclusively onto the schools.

As the research suggests, the goal of accountability is to achieve the common good – improve professional and school life, ensure pupils' growth, academic achievement, mutual confidence and collective efficacy, internal resilience, and sustainability. These functions of accountability sit well with MacBeath's (2010, p. 8) claim that shared accountability "strengthens a sense of ownership of staff, creates a feeling of reciprocity and is in itself an important source of professional development". In *The new meaning of educational change*, Fullan (2016) reiterates this position remarking that internal to a group, like my research schools, accountability is the strongest foundation that establishes individual and collective responsibility and resilience. In fact, Elmore (2004) had earlier made an interesting remark that when there is an internal accountability, responsibility, collective confidence and expectations within a school align. It may have been based on the converging belief on the extreme importance of accountability that the participants call for everyone – schools, government, communities, families, and media to practise accountability. As the World Bank Group (2018a) emphasises, accountability in public governance is one of the corner stones of good governance (in my research context, good leadership).

These different ways through which the research participants show familiarity and express shared understanding of the LfL principles is an extremely important step in the change implementation success. In their research that involved some 60 low SES schools in Australia to identify specific capabilities needed for principals to be effective leaders in the teaching of literacy, Dempster, Robson, Gaffney, Lock, and McKennarney (2012) found that shared understanding between principals and teachers of their schools' moral purpose was crucial. It is apparent that when people become familiar with an innovation and develop shared meanings of its key concepts and principles such as the LfL, they tend to act in ways that are symphonious. Levin and Fullan's (2008) permeable connectivity, and Barber's (2007)

‘guiding coalition’ as explained in chapter 3 capture the essence of my point. No innovation, according to Marris (1975) can be assimilated unless its meaning is shared. Collective and inter-relational processes of sense-making are essential constituents of change implementation (Bate, Bevan & Robert, 2005) because these can fuel motivation (Fullan, 2016). In my view motivation has the propensity to cause what Raelin (2003) calls ‘leaderful communities’ where all members of schools have something to contribute.

A careful analysis of the shared meanings the participants expressed about the key words which undergird the LfL principles shows that the idea of relationality and achievement of the moral purpose run through all of them. This may have been the reason why as a collective unit, the principles are perceived as relational tools which reveal and or remind stakeholders of socio-cultural behaviours which can be considered as ordinary yet function as powerful drivers of positive change in schools. Shared meaning is tricky though because it can be mistaken for what Berger and Luckmann (1967) call objective reality of social phenomena. These phenomena denote a policy or programme whose meaning is so communally produced and owned that it exists outside of any given individual. The danger of this rigid objectivisation of meaning is what Fullan (2016) describes as a glorified version of the subjective conceptions of producers of change. Fullan’s observation hints at the inevitability of disproportionate influence of certain kinds of micro political power where some of them are so vociferous that the meaning they convey is forced down the throats of others who otherwise would not have shared in it. Such dynamics are obviously dangerous prelude to any change process because as researchers, including Marris (1975); Berg, Slegers, Geijsel and Vandenberghe (2000), and Fullan (2016) purport, subjective meanings matter for digestion and assimilation of innovations.

Like every social space, my research schools and the stakeholders – Government, headteachers, teachers, pupils, parents, and circuit supervisors are not impervious to differentials in experiences, gender, age, and power influences. However, given that in the research schools, shared meaning of the principles emanates largely from individual interviews on the key concepts such as learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability rather than directly from the principles, it is unlikely that the meaning participants shared was imposed on them. In my view, shared meaning represents the melting point of individually constructed meanings which present a similar reality. It is a crucial prelude to re-orienting participants’ attitudes and re-creating structures that facilitate change.

## **Re-orientating attitudes and re-creating structures inspire embrace of the principles**

### *Re-orienting attitudes and philosophies*

I discovered from the interview data that despite some signs of appreciation for the LfL principles by the participants at the initial stages of their introduction, some teachers, pupils and parents from the research schools still held on to their existing individualistic, lethargic, fatalistic, and indifferent attitudes towards leadership, teaching, and learning. In his case study that investigates provision of quality basic education in twelve basic public and private schools (six apiece) in the Central Region of Ghana, Ampiah (2008) reiterates the general low regard Ghanaians have for public basic schools. This partly explains the lethargic feeling. It was therefore, necessary in the LfL incorporation process for the headteachers to help the other stakeholders to re-orient their mindsets, behaviours, and philosophies. This is consistent with Deutschman's (2007) quote of the Harvard Business School's John Kotter in his [Deutschman] article 'Change or die' in *Fast Company Magazine*. Deutschman quotes: "The central issue is never strategy or structure. [It] is always about changing the behaviour of people", [and] behaviour change happens mostly by speaking to the emotions of people's feelings" (p. 2).

Broadly conceived, I think the process of changing people's attitudes or behaviour can only be part of the overall strategy but it seems what is being emphasised is the central place attitudinal change holds in the context of any change implementation efforts. This is a fact that participants of the research overwhelmingly relate to, and it is important because re-orienting people's attitudes is about finding means to help them to see problems or solutions in ways that influence their emotions, not just thought (Deutschman, 2007). Recently, Fullan (2016) reiterates Kotter and Deutschman's propositions when he says that people's behaviours and emotions often change first before they form beliefs and that is because they must get insights and feelings that relate to the new beliefs. In other words, Kotter, Deutschman and Fullan, and evidence from the research show that attitudinal change is key to the success of any innovation and the crucialness of winning the emotions (hearts) and shared thoughts (minds) of the stakeholders is paramount.

These overlapping views notwithstanding, the contextual realities with which stakeholders grapple, are a real opportunity to work stakeholders into attitudinal re-orientation to embrace change. As analysis of the data in chapter 6 shows, stakeholders were emotionally open to something new because they were tired of lingering divisions, low morale and apathy in the schools. No wonder, as shown in chapter 8, the LfL-inspired beliefs such as 'we can do it', and 'everybody must be on board the school improvement' pierced straight into the

emotional spaces of teachers, pupils and parents. It was apparent that rebranding themselves as capable of achieving excellence in teaching and learning was beneficial because it connected to their beliefs and struggles and inspired their self-worth, efficacy, and co-agency that injected new positive energy into the stakeholders. Timperley and Parrs (2005) and Fullan (2016) share a similar conclusion from school contexts in New Zealand and Canada respectively asserting that change revolves around behaviour or attitudes, beliefs and values, knowledge and skills, and outcomes.

Two practical insights emerge from the interview and FGDs data which emphasise that attitudinal re-orientation is crucial to the LfL-inspired change implementation process. The first is recurring hints from participants that when headteachers and teachers address pupils by the titles of the professions they were aspiring to, say ‘Barrister A, or journalist B’, it injects enthusiasm, self-efficacy, hard work, and cooperation in them. Second, is the principle of making the pupils, and in fact, other stakeholders feel proud of themselves and their efforts, little as they may be. This reorients particularly, pupils to what Yeager and Dweck (2012) call growth mindset. Perhaps, the most important strategy that pervades the interviews, the FGDs and observations data, which is at the basis of re-orienting stakeholders’ attitudes towards the LfL ideals is that the headteachers practised the ideals they preached. They show exemplarity in creative fidelity, courage to initiate change, sharing leadership, and use dialogue rather than a combative approach to addressing issues. These dispositions, knowledge, and skills resonate with findings of some of the school improvement literature by Ylimakim, Jacobson and Drysdale (2007); Bryk et al. (2010); Dempster et al. (2012), and Fullan (2016). In an international multi-case study that examines successful headteachers who made a difference in high-poverty schools in the USA, England and Australia, Ylimakim et al. (2007) conclude that such headteachers were able to initiate change, foster a friendly school environment, and provide opportunities for teachers and students to build their intellectual and experiential capacities. Dempster et al.’s (2012) study on principals as literacy leaders in Australia made similar conclusions.

### *Creating and re-creating structures*

As Kotter claims, when it comes to implementing change in the context of organisations competing for a place in free market economies like the United States of America, structures do not matter but behaviour change does. This does not quite fit well in the world of public basic schools in developing countries like Ghana where schools struggle for basic infrastructure including teaching and learning materials and leadership competencies as I

discussed in chapter 2. Thus, creating and re-creating structures which in this context represent new anthropological visions, creativities or initiatives to improve leading, teaching and learning are crucial in getting stakeholders out of their ghettos onboard the LfL-driven school improvement voyage. As Fullan (2016) notes, change will always fail until the right structures, approaches and processes that engage its consumers in developing and applying new knowledge, beliefs, skills, and understandings are created and nurtured. Therefore, creating and re-creating structures seeks to facilitate or provide the right conditions that can engage stakeholders to practise the LfL values. This is because cultures do not change by mandate but by modelling new specific values and strategies which displace or reshape existing norms and structures (Elmore (2004).

Analysing the data especially minutes of PTA and staff meetings, and interviews, it was obvious that leadership dynamics have changed in the research schools from the previous person-centred, top-down instructional and closed-door approaches to activity-centred, trust-driven, devolved, shared, and open-door approaches. This is welcome news for teachers, pupils and parents because as current literature in educational leadership including Harris' (2010) portrays, the top-down, bureaucratic, heroic and position-centred approach to leading people is in retreat since it just does not work well in contemporary complex society. It breeds fear, conformism, pretence, and as Melé (2005) observes, creates a gap between shared values and a school's structure. This may have underpinned, among other epiphanic strategies, the decision of the headteachers of the research schools to adopt the idea of rotational leadership. This is an approach where headteachers and teachers take turns to chair staff meetings, which in the Ghanaian context, is conventionally the job of the headteacher. Challenging as this may have proved to be for some teachers (see chapter 8), the practice resonates with Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) belief that "leaders developing other leaders is at the heart of sustainability", a concept that is part of the very marrow of the LfL theory and practice.

As the data consistently showed, leadership that is team-oriented and embraces individual as well as collective agential activities, including parents, to annex their talents to the school improvement efforts was one way of re-creating leadership culture. The most creative way is the promotion of the idea of non-positional leadership that inspires stakeholders who are not in formal leadership positions to understand themselves as leaders and take leadership initiatives in their everyday contexts in schools. Bangs and Frost (2015) strongly argue for non-positional leadership because of its role in inspiring and energising teachers to become agents of change with an enhanced sense of moral purpose. In her *Passionate politics*, Bunch



(1987) says that leadership is people having ideas, imaginations, and particular skills that enable them to translate these into initiatives which they carry through. Very much in alignment with these views, my research reveals that non-positional leadership has propelled both teachers and pupils into self-confidence and initiative-taking. This resonates with Sergiovanni's (2001) idea of 'leadership density' which says that a successful school is one in which the maximum degree of leadership is exercised by the maximum number of people including teachers, pupils and parents. Other terminologies which stakeholders mentioned to illustrate how the schools created and re-created structures include: learning supervision, subsidiarity, and adaptive teaching.

Analysis of the data especially the classroom lesson observations suggests that the headteachers play the supervision role as enlightened novices who observe, learn, and offer helpful insights instead of the usual policing approach. This is because they believe supervision by itself is about learning and should be a medium to exchange ideas. This practice is consistent with Spillane's (2006), and Bakkenes, Vermut and Wubbels' (2010) idea of learning in context. These authors converge on the conviction that learning in context is a recipe for changing the very context itself. Everyone's learning in context, be it through supervision, teaching or engaging in dialogue is exactly what Leadership for Learning is about (MacBeath, 2009). This notwithstanding, I observed that the entrenched, stiff, hierarchical culture remains a challenge because as some teachers and pupils stated, supervision is not their job but the headteachers' irrespective of whether it has been transformed into a learning activity that everyone can participate in or not.

The opportunity for everyone in the school to play a supervisory role hints at the idea of subsidiarity. While the principle of subsidiarity is often applied in political contexts (for example, in EU constitutions), it is gradually becoming a moral base for business organisations and educational institutions such as schools. Irrespective of the contexts of its applicability, however, its fundamental ethical principle holds that a higher authority like headteachers should not exercise functions which could be efficiently carried out by a lesser authority like teachers or pupils (Melé, 2005). As the data reveal, this is the sense in which the term is used: "Giving subsidiarity does not mean giving room for people to undermine my authority. No, the idea is just to give the teachers and pupils the space to unleash their leadership and creative potentials towards achieving the school's vision" (AHT). Even though the second, third, fourth, and fifth principles of the LfL do not explicitly mention 'subsidiarity', a careful reading of them in MacBeath and Dempster (2009); Jull et al. (2014);

and Malakolunthu et al. (2014) capture the spirit of this principle – believe in and celebrate the anthropological endowments of everyone.

If subsidiarity aims to appreciate and unleash teachers and pupils’ creativities as the above renditions purport, it is easy to understand why adaptive teaching is embraced. As I understand from the data (analysed in chapter 8), adaptive teaching is about ensuring that the needs and talents of the different categories of pupils in the classroom are considered by the teacher. It rests on child-centred approaches to teaching and learning where pupils’ experiences are both the entry point to as well as centre of the teaching and learning activity. It involves the use of varied pedagogies, familiar images and objects, and a blend of mono, bi and multilingual approaches to teaching. Ampiah’s (2008) observations in Ghanaian basic schools’ classrooms credits teacher-pupil classroom interactions, use of TLMs, varied pedagogies, a mixture of English language and Ghanaian language, and attention to individual pupils’ needs as good practices that promote quality teaching and learning. Adaptive teaching is also appraised in other contexts including the Netherlands where in the primary classroom contexts, Van den Berg, Slegers, Geijssels, and Vandenberghe (2000) discovered in their innovation implementation research that adaptive teaching and learning are crucial for achieving quality education. As these authors posit, adaptive teaching is linked to clear recognition of differences between learners and accepting these differences in capabilities. It entails flexible classroom grouping of pupils, and regular evaluation of their progress. They add that adaptive learning systems – learner-centred, change-focused, value-based, and technologically-mediated spaces, are key for adaptive teaching. These views echo an earlier call by Darling-Hammond (1996) for a pedagogical climate that nurtures pupils’ spirits and makes them feel safe and secure.

However, even if teachers have values, skills and knowledge which are the three key attributes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching profession (Tan & Low, 2016), and are willing to create child-centred pedagogical climates, the country-context challenges make it difficult to create a technologically-mediated classroom space to fully achieve adaptive teaching and learning. The story of a Ghanaian basic school information and communications technology (ICT) teacher carried in an article, “Ghanaian blackboard ICT teacher gets standing ovation in Singapore” (GhanaWeb, 2018), went viral globally because this teacher was spotted using chalk to draw features of Microsoft Word monitors, system units, keyboards - in order to teach pupils because the school has no computers. This is commonplace in public basic schools in Ghana including my research schools, so creating technologically-mediated classrooms as part of adaptive teaching is a challenge.

Apart from introducing learning supervision, subsidiarity, non-positional leadership, and adaptive teaching and learning, analysis of the data also shows the schools deploy what stakeholders call creativities. My analysis of the sense in which creativity is used in the data shows that it denotes efforts, imaginations and initiatives which the schools generate to help enculturate the ideals of the LfL principles. These creativities include the ‘school-level parenting’, ‘every gift counts’ or ‘each other’s keeper’, ‘WhatsApp platforms’, and ‘school to family/community outreach and alumni involvement’ initiatives. The traditionalist view of creativity is credited to the Enlightenment German philosopher, Kant (1790) in his *Critique of judgment*. In Kant’s view creativity is linked to creative genius – a mental aptitude necessary for production of fine art, a capacity characterised by originality and opposed to imitation. This conceptualisation of creativity does not resonate with the understanding that emerges from my research context. In this context, the perception of creativity is disproportionately informed by the existential realities of the micro and macro environments of the schools. It is perceived more in terms of imaginative thinking and actions that inspire the schools to embrace the needed LfL-driven change. The ‘school-level parenting’ initiative is *inter alia*, inspired by lack of or inadequate parental support for pupils to be able to focus on their learning. It serves as a means of building a good teacher (school)-pupil familiarity and creating a sustainable link with the pupils beyond the walls of the school and instilling a good sense of self-awareness and a moral compass for navigating the intrigues of education. One big challenge though, as teacher AT1 remarks, is that because of this support, some parents shirk their responsibility.

This ambivalence raises the question of professional boundaries regarding the degree to which schools should bear the role of parenting. This reality seems to transcend my research context because Tan and Low (2016) observe a similar challenge in Singapore. They realise that in the current push in Singapore for 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies which require parents and community involvement, they wonder if schools are not overstepping their role as educators:

Are schools doing too much that they are infringing on the care and upbringing duties of parents? Are there specific character traits or values that should stay in the family and those that should come under the purview of schools, and if so, who determines them? Where is the boundary between the school and parents? (p. 64)

As my research clearly reveals, the schools’ creative efforts to reach out to family/community can encourage some parents to renege on their roles as motivators, advisers, disciplinarians and teachers, and wait for the teachers to play such roles on their behalf. Nonetheless this

creativity enabled the schools to build close bonds with parents and the communities, encouraged parents and opinion leaders to make the homes and the communities conducive for expressing leadership, learning and dialogue. The ‘every gift counts’ or ‘be each other’s keeper’ initiatives, which involve sharing material as well as non-material gifts have enabled pupils especially the needy ones not to drop out of school. The non-material activities including the inculcation of mutual appreciation, recognition, support and challenge which help to nurture every talent, confidence and security relate to the realities which Dempster and Bagakis (2009) say can create a conducive environment for learning.

Taking advantage of facilities provided by current technology to improve leadership, teaching, learning, and relationships is something that scholars such as Fullan (2015) and Fullan and Boyle (2014) have encouraged among teachers and pupils. In implementing their ‘new pedagogies for deep learning’ in over 1000 schools around the world, these authors stated that students and teachers by and large are bored and alienated with traditional schooling and look forward to technological integration. This claim is in concordance with what the ‘WhatsApp platforms’ have done for teachers. While some teachers, acknowledge abuse of these platforms and imprudent use including being late for lessons, an observation that prompted other educators like the current pro-vice chancellor of the University of Cape Coast (Oduro, 2018) to propose restrictions on their access during the working day, these platforms prove to be a useful creativity that play a role in incorporating the LfL principles. As some teachers like BT7 remark, the WhatsApp platform is a great medium for practising critical friendship with colleagues because through it they critically review each other’s professional commitment, behaviour and conduct. It is also considered as the most economical, easy, efficient and effective means for networking with others for institutional improvement. In *Improving learning how to learn* in which MacBeath et al. (2007) and McCormick, Fox, Carmichael and Procter (2007) contributed to how schools can improve learning how to learn at the classroom, schools and beyond school levels, these authors identify networking and building social capital as helpful practices.

Additionally, the creativity of rotational chairing of staff meetings resurfaced and is considered by teachers as one of the best hands-on opportunities to lead their co-equals in discussing challenging issues concerning their schools.

These dynamics suggest that creativity inheres in everyday life, a reality that is consistent with Willis’ (1990) idea of ethnographic and symbolic creativity, Craft’s (2000) possibility thinking, and Banaj, Burn and Buckingham’s (2010) imaginative and purposeful creativity. Referring to England’s national curriculum assessment website, Banaj et al. say that

creativity is imaginative and purposeful and improves pupils' self-esteem, motivation and achievement, and prepares them for life. For Craft (2001), the perspectives of creativity in education that won more admiration in the last 50 years have been those that marry creativity and imagination. Thus, she takes an inclusive approach by suggesting that everyone has the potential for creativity as it is a fundamental aspect of human nature, a view that counterposes Kant's restrictive view of creative genius. Often referred to as the 'little 'c' creativity' (Banaj et al., 2010), Craft thinks of creativity as the ability to cope effectively with changing life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She distinguishes this clearly from creativity in art and from the paradigm shifting creativity of the Kantian 'great figures'. Rather, "creativity is based on possibility thinking which means refusing to be stumped by circumstances but being imaginative to find a way around a problem" (Craft, 2001, pp. 3-4).

Negus and Pickering (2004) and Thomson and Hall (2006) converge on labelling Craft's notion of creativity unfavourably as vulgar creativity. Negus and Pickering think Craft's definition of creativity collapses the concept into everyday life as if they are indistinguishable yet not all actions of our everyday life are creative. Resonating with this view, Thomson and Hall argue that it is divergence and challenge rather than the ability to successfully negotiate everyday life that is at the heart of creative endeavours. They prefer to see a theory of creativity that is more heterogenous, recognises difference, and redistributes social capital (Banaj et al. 2010).

While I do not dismiss any of these positions in the hermeneutical polemics on creativity, I am drawn to Craft's view of creativity based on the cultural context of Ghana, the revelations from the research data, and inclusive educational leadership theories and practices like the LfL which encourage respect for every talent. Reflecting on her perspective, it is easy to appreciate its practicality and ability to pull together the ethical, social, and conceptual domains of everyday socio-cultural, economic and political complexities of life in a context like Ghanaian public basic schools where every effort that keeps stakeholders on the same page in the pursuit of quality leading, teaching and learning cannot be overemphasised. In cultural psychology, works of Bruner (1990); Vygotsky (1991); Csikszentmihalyi (1996); and Engeström (1996) all point to social activity and cultural resources as central features of the creative process. Thus, in this tradition, creativity, as Banaj et al. (2010) interpret, is productively seen as a lifelong ability to transform cultural resources and one's own identity and learning. This, like Craft's view is consistent with the revelations in my research. In Volume 2, Issue 1 of the *LfL Newsletter* headteachers of LfL schools shared how they used their knowledge of the LfL principles to address the issues of funding and paucity of

infrastructure (see table 2.2) to improve their schools. For example, headteachers Aguri (2012) got Ghana Cement Foundation to build a three classroom block for his school, and Holdbrook (2012) successfully negotiated for electric poles from the government for her school. Their counterpart, Yussif (2012) also got CAMFED (Campaign for female education), a UK-based non-governmental organisation that provided furniture for his school. This ability to use ideas from the LfL programme to transform schools is what creativity is. But creativity that is enshrined in collaborative action can better engender a desired change. As MacBeath (2009) puts it: “Change takes root when staff collectively begin to get hold of a powerful idea” (p. 138).

### **Collaborative action is a key lever for change implementation**

“Your everyday involves countless collaborations” (Bryant, 1993)

Read any book or listen to any speech in whatever persuasion that aims at positive change amidst our increasingly complex and anxiety-laden world marked by “widespread distrust in institutions, in experts, and vertiginous pace of change”, as Stephen Toope<sup>16</sup> says, and the word collaboration is often proposed as the way forward. In fact, the word collaboration was, and I think, still is, the mantra of the immediate past Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, Leszek Borysiewicz. In his opening remarks at the March 2016 Next Einstein Forum (NEF) global gathering, Dakar, Senegal on the theme ‘Advancement of science in Africa through education’, he said that in the face of global challenges, “the solutions demand that we work together, and collaboration is the name of the game”. Collaboration is also a common theme in many writings including Crosby and Bryson’s (2005) *Leadership for the common good*; MacBeath and Dempster’s (2009) *Connecting leadership and learning*; Fullan’s (2015) *Freedom to change*; his *The new meaning of educational change* (2016); and the *Teaching and learning for the twenty-first century* of Reimers and Chung (2016). It therefore comes as no surprise to me that my research data consistently points to collaborative actions as the life force of the successful incorporation of the LfL principles.

As the interview data from both headteachers revealed, it was not going to be possible to implement any meaningful change without the collaborative action of other stakeholders. This is because as discussed in chapter 2, the LfL-inspired change was enculturated within complex socio-cultural, economic and political complexities. Therefore, the collaborative

---

<sup>16</sup> Professor Stephen Toope is the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and said this in his inaugural address to the University on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017.

actions narrated in chapter 8 proved pivotal in maximising opportunities and mitigating threats to the success of the LfL programme. This is consistent with evidence from DuFour, Eaker, DuFour, and Karhaneck (2010); Eells (2011); and Hattie (2015) that it is the collaborative group that accelerates change. From my experiences in various leadership capacities within and outside of educational contexts across Africa, it is almost impossible for any innovation initiator and implementer to go solo and expect successful implementation.

There is literature in Ghana (Quansah, 2000; Acheampong, 2004; Segura, 2009) and Africa (Pansiri, 2011; Eacott & Asuga, 2014) that show that laudable system-wide quality leading, teaching and learning-driven interventions fail because of the lack of appropriate and adequate collaborative action between initiators and implementers. If it existed at all, the ‘we are better together than alone’ wisdom remained as a lip service rather than a real belief from the mind and heart. Thus, the finding that collaborative action is crucial to change implementation is in consonance with current literature on school improvement.

However, as Wittgenstein (1953) cautions, the functions of words are as diverse as the functions of objects so it is only apt not to be trapped in the naivety that collaboration means the same thing to everyone. In my research analysis cognate terms including teamwork, working together, cooperating or partnering are used with collaboration interchangeably. Stakeholders also refer to mantra such as ‘carrying everyone along the school improvement voyage’, ‘be each other’s keeper’ and ‘collaborative learning’. As headteacher BHT elucidated: “Collaboration is about all the key stakeholders dreaming with the shared understanding and determination of what we want to achieve and availing their talents, creativities, and time to achieve it”. This is consistent with an observation made by Hargreaves, Boyle and Harris (2014) in their reflection on the intricacies of uplifting leadership and raising team performances in England. Using the then low-performing, and high-poverty boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets of London as examples, these authors discovered that through the strategy of dreaming and acting together with determination, these boroughs became some of the high performing local authorities.

It can be deduced from the sense in which collaboration is used in my research context and Hargreaves et al.’s view that the concept embeds interpersonal relationships in its definitional equation. This is because it would be a contradiction in terms to talk of people dreaming and acting together without interpersonal relationships. Fullan (2015, p. 47) shares a similar view but prefers to refer to this interrelatedness as “cooperation” rather than collaboration. A more elaborate unpacking of collaboration and cooperation is offered by Morieux and Tollman (2014) in the context of the complex corporate world in their *Six*

*simple rules*. These authors claim that collaboration is feeling-driven activity that avoids divergence and real cooperation purposely to maintain conviviality within a team rather than achieve a goal. Cooperation as they argue, “by contrast, involves directly considering the needs of others in creating a joint output or goal. Cooperation contains a notion of shared intentionality; we define objectives together and share the outcome” (Morieux & Tollman, 2014, pp. 198-199).

While this partitioning may make grammatical sense, it is hard to perceive it as such from the lens of philosophy and my research findings. Logically, how can people engage themselves in teamwork without any goal they intend to achieve? Then that is not teamwork which by essence is often anchored on achieving a goal. And how possible and sustainable is it for people, usually diverse in perspectives, to team up on the principle of feelings that avoids expression of divergences? It is possible for people to express divergences through the avenue of feelings or emotions just as the avenue of reasoning allows. From the analysis of the research data, stakeholders collaborated because they had shared meaning and visions – to improve pupils’ learning outcomes through quality leading, teaching, learning, relating and accountability. I argue that relationality, intentionality, and expression of differences underpin human collaborations.

Collaborative action is not easy to achieve because people have different ideological stances, beliefs, expectations, and interpretations about what constitutes quality leading, teaching and learning. The reality of ideological divergences and people’s unreadiness to let go certain culturally informed preconceptions constitute the basis for the epiphanic insight in my research that “the illiterates of 21<sup>st</sup> century Ghana are not those who cannot read or write but those who cannot unlearn to learn” (AT1). Therefore, as Levin and Fullan (2008) remark, resilient efforts over a period of years are important for a meaningful collaboration and lasting change to take place.

These observations counterpose Morieux and Tollman’s claim which reduces collaboration to mere good interpersonal relationships based on feelings. The Sheffield Hallam University’s drama theorist, Bryant (2003) identifies in his *Six dilemmas of collaboration* a set of dilemmas which make collaboration more than a mere feeling-driven activity. These are threat, persuasion, rejection, positioning, cooperation and trust all of which are part of the equation of collaboration. Beneath the dilemmas are often internal tensions – divergent aspirations, free-riding, ‘grab it and run’; hidden agendas; history; language and procedures; leadership, and external pressures such as irresistible temptations, and specific demands. Thus, what dilemmas do is to make people uncomfortable because of



these physical and psychological sides to them (Bryant, 2003) but in my view, they also wake us up from our slumber to new thinking, creativity, and collaborative agility. What is clear from my research is that a lot of effort is needed to get people to act collaboratively. However, when it is achieved, people are inspired to say that as finite beings ‘we are better together’. Collaboration can also be a catalyst for stronger motivation and interpersonal relationships among people.

### **Motivation and cordial relationships can overcome paucity of infrastructure**

It emerged from the data that both physical infrastructure – good classrooms, availability of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, and socio-emotional infrastructure, were needed for the successful incorporation of the Leadership for Learning principles. However, in a developing country like Ghana where the Government is unable adequately to fund education, the paucity of infrastructure remains a big challenge. This implies that even if schools can create good interpersonal relationships, the physical and socio-emotional infrastructural equation remains unbalanced. As stated in chapter 6, mediocrity, apathy, presenteeism, and failure are defining characteristics of most public basic schools.

However, given the ubiquity of the high-level enthusiasm and commitment which I witnessed in the research schools, I inquired about the factors driving these dynamics. Analysis of the interviews, FGDs, and minutes of PTA meetings show that motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic and cordial interpersonal relationships spurred the schools to achieve their outcomes.

#### *Motivation*

As the narrative in chapter 10 reveals, some stakeholders including the headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents are intrinsically motivated, and they have influenced others through their exemplarity. The headteachers were credited by teachers, parents and pupils for being inspirational. This suggests that intrinsic motivation can woo others into mutual motivation. While teachers and pupils made such exclamations about the headteachers, some teachers equally received similar appraisals from the headteachers, pupils and parents. So motivation is a crucial factor which promotes change implementation. No wonder Fullan (2016, p. 39) makes the following assertion in chapter 3 of *The new meaning of educational change*: “Take any 100 books on change, and they all boil down to one word: motivation ... because every change process has a bias for action”. The basis for action in this research context is that the headteachers, first evangelisers of the LfL ideals communicated the

principles well and were exemplars of the principles they preached, and this has motivated others to embrace them.

This notwithstanding, I discovered from the data that despite some stakeholders being intrinsically motivated, school-level as well as beyond-school challenges (see chapter 2) tend to drain the motivational energies of stakeholders and sometimes expose them to maladaptive reactions. This suggests that in the daily work of schools, the melange of consoling and desolating moments is unavoidable, and stakeholders must acknowledge and deal with these moments appropriately. In an empirical research on socio-cognitive approaches to motivation and personality, Dweck and Leggett (2000), and earlier, Diener and Dweck (1980) found that maladaptive ‘helpless’ responses and more adaptive ‘mastery-oriented’ responses constitute the two forms of cognition-affect-behaviour responses in daily work. The helpless response is characterised by an avoidance of challenge and a deterioration of performance in the face of obstacles. The mastery-oriented response involves the seeking of challenging tasks and the maintenance of effective striving under failure.

I found out from the data that the research schools, based on their culture of shared belief, co-agency, collective and individual efficacies, and resilience, show more of the mastery-response to the challenging difficulties of daily school experiences. Their ‘we can improve’ mantra seems to fit well into what Leggett (1985) refers to as intelligence that is malleable, where schools are able to set learning goals that drive them positively to confront and overcome challenges rather than offering attributions such as paucity of physical infrastructure for their failure.

### *Cordial interpersonal relationships*

In *Interpersonal relations*, Obozov (1979) defines interpersonal relationships as the mutual readiness of people to communicate in a certain way, accompanied by emotions (positive, indifferent and negative) in the context of communication and other shared activities. This definition is key to the unlocking of my research findings regarding interpersonal relationships. It was apparent from the narrative in chapter 10 that the relational dynamics in the research schools embed positive, indifferent, and negative dispositions. These compare to what Kleptsova and Balabanov (2016) in their empirical quantitative research on ‘Development of humane interpersonal relationships’ call humane (positive), neutral (indifferent) and inhumane or egoistic (negative) relationships. According to these authors negative relationships are characterized by orientation to oneself and using that to define what is ideal or right for everyone else. It often breeds instability, limits the

perceptions of other people by negative evaluation, and subsequently leads to anger, jealousy, envy, fear, cynicism, apathy, aggression, regret, despair, anxiety, hatred, contempt (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016), and divisions. These experiences characterised the culture of the research schools at the initial stages of introducing the LfL principles. Not only did negative relationships exist; there were also traces of indifferent relationships where some stakeholders just could not be bothered by whatever was going on; they rejected any evaluation and showed no interest in the life of the school. The data present this kind of relational dynamic as presenteeism (defined in chapter 2). When schools are characterised by these kinds of relational dynamics, maladaptive helpless responses manifest themselves and the consequence is for stakeholders to attribute poor teaching and learning outcomes to lack of or inadequate supply of physical facilities.

Much as these orientations characterised the pre-LfL stages of the research schools, and to some small degree were still part of them at the time of my research, what I discovered is that the stakeholders, especially the headteachers managed to humanise the interpersonal relationships into much more cordial or humane relationships (within and outside) the schools. By humanising interpersonal relationships, I mean to say they managed them by letting human values of kindness, trust (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016), empathy, and mutual help drive the relationships. The headteachers achieved this by creating room for creatively cognitive, social and pedagogical interactions through personal as well as various media, including social media WhatsApp interactions, where stakeholders render challenging support to one another. As teacher BT6 remarks: “Through the good interpersonal relationships, we become a family of friends who connect freely our emotions and talents and maintain our integrity as a group. Therefore, whether we have all the physical facilities or not, we are improving because everyone feels homely here”. No wonder as many pupils, teachers, and parents confirmed, pupils prefer to be in school than at home.

This does not mean that relationships have been perfect because the schools have had to contend with relational challenges given that they are made up of human social groups. Psychoanalysis and philosophical analysis of social groups, as Fullan (2016) discovers, are often fraught with challenges and dilemmas. What it means is that cordial interpersonal relationships are interiorized to include positive imaging of others and exteriorized (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016) in the form of mutually trusting and rewarding actions and reactions. In this way, internal coherence – the ability of educators in a school or system to connect and align resources to carry out an improvement strategy, engage in collective

learning, and use that learning to provide students with richer educational opportunities (Forman, Stosich, & Bocala, 2017) permeates the fabric of the research schools' culture.

It is in the above contexts of the role of motivation and cordial interpersonal relationships that they can mitigate paucity of infrastructure. Despite the positive influence of shared meaning, re-orientation of mindsets, collaborative action, motivation and cordial relationships on incorporating the LfL principles, household poverty, ubiquity of illiteracy and youth unemployment continue to frustrate their most effective incorporation.

### **Household poverty, illiteracy and unemployment are threats to change implementation**

Don't ask me what poverty is because you have met it outside my house. Look at the house and count the number of holes. Look at the clothes I am wearing. Look at everything and write what you see. What you see is poverty. *Poor man, Kenya 1997* (Nayaran et al. 2000 cited in Blackmon, 2008, p. 179)

Although the above quote reflected the context of Kenya and was expressed over a decade prior to my research in Ghana, it captures the reality of my research contexts. As a Ghanaian with good familiarity with the socio-cultural and economic conditions in Ghana, I argue that the ubiquity of household poverty is indisputable. Poverty is a complicated concept to unpack and measure because it includes material and non-material dimensions (Maliki, 2011). This notwithstanding, evidence from the Ghana Statistical Service – GSS's (2015) analysis of poverty profile between 2005-2013 using the Ghana Living Standards Survey Round 6 (GLSS6) data presents poverty as one of the main issues in Ghana despite some improvements over the years. This corroborates Palmer (2010), and Ferreira et al.'s (2015) observations in chapter 2 where I dedicate a section to reviewing poverty in relation to education. A careful examination of the GSS's (2015) conceptualisation of poverty portrays the term in its material or consumptive sense – low income, lack of access to assets, as well as non-material sense – insecurity, illiteracy, lack of empowerment and participation in and access to services. These different aspects combine to keep households, and sometimes whole communities in abject poverty. Despite poverty being a national issue, the coastal fishing slums – my research sites, have been experiencing even worse levels of poverty, which the GSS (2015) says are becoming extreme. This is a situation where people's standard of living

is insufficient to meet their basic nutritional requirements even if they devote their entire consumption budget to food. This revelation confirms the research finding that poverty is ubiquitous. But, my interest is more on the relationship between the ubiquity of household poverty and the incorporation of the LfL ideals, especially the focus on pupils' learning and integral growth.

Most of the participants said that household poverty was playing an inhibitive role in the schools' LfL-inspired improvement efforts. Some teachers from both schools, and the circuit supervisors who perceived poverty as both illiteracy and an inability to meet basic needs such as housing, food and health (Maliki, 2011; GSS, 2015), consider poverty as having a telling influence on pupils' learning. It was apparent from the data that inadequate housing, domestic violence, inability to provide food and learning materials, teenage pregnancies, and lack of parental cooperation and support are direct consequences of household poverty. These consequences which flow into the schools negatively affect quality of teaching and learning. Taking the issue of lack of adequate housing and domestic violence, for example, it was clear from my conversations with pupils and community-level observations that streetism – the phenomenon of pupils spending disproportionately longer hours on the streets including sleeping on them at night is a reality. Most of the pupils belong to large size families of about eight often making do in one small room in which they witness and experience all sorts of domestic violence.

As some of the teenage boys shared, they must survive on their own given little or no material support or adult role models. Thus, they either end up making their own temporary wooden sheds somewhere to accommodate themselves, as I witnessed for myself or yield to the amoral demands of what they call 'sugar mummies' – usually single ladies who are much older than them. Similarly, the teenage girls seek solutions to the poverty and housing challenges by giving in to unscrupulous men who place themselves at vantage points to take undue advantage of the situation. Therefore, despite knowing that focusing on their learning is crucial, they are often compelled by their circumstances to invest much of their time and energies trying to survive rather than to learn. These findings only confirm a reality that Arnot, Casely-Hayford and Chege (2012) raised in their empirical research on young people's narratives in urban conurbations in Ghana and Kenya. Consistent with my research finding, these scholars conclude that African youths living in urban slums suffer poverty, school dropout, isolation, discrimination, rootlessness, violence and sexual victimisation - especially the girls.

The issue of inadequate housing in Ghana particularly as it is linked to poverty, is acknowledged by the Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research – ISSER (2013) of the University of Ghana and GSS (2014) whose research findings show that housing remains one of the critical development challenges because of the huge gap between supply and demand. This is and should be a concern for anyone who values the philosophy of pupils learning in and outside of school walls. As Songsore and McGranahan (1993) and Owusu (2010) state, housing environment as an everyday landscape has the propensity to support or limit the physical, mental, emotional and social well-being including stigmatisation. In school B, one of the initial issues the stakeholders had to address when the LfL was introduced was the discrimination or victimisation labels – ‘bungalow’ children and fisherfolk children. Bungalow children represent those few children from economically stable homes who live in decent accommodation or bungalows, and those living in squalid environments are the fisherfolk children. In its recent 2015 Labour Force Report, GSS (2016, p. 172) is categorical that “a better housing condition enhances security and stability which provide good health”. It is lack of this physical, mental, and emotional well-being due to inadequate and poor housing that make it extremely difficult for teachers to get pupils to prioritise learning at school and home, and to be able to practise dialogue and shared leadership.

The lack of/inadequate housing is not the only poverty-induced reality that has proved inhibitive to implementing the LfL-driven change. The research data also show that low income compels the affected pupils to arrive at school on empty stomachs, unkempt, tired, traumatised and absent-minded. The magnitude of the trauma is worse concerning ‘house-helpers’ whose situation I clarified in the section: ‘challenges faced’ in chapter 10. In its most recent world development report titled ‘Learning to realise education’s promise’, the World Bank Group (2018b) talks of three dimensions of learning crisis: poor learning outcomes themselves, immediate causes and deeper systemic causes. Under the immediate causes, the report identifies pupils arriving in school unprepared for learning as one of the causes. This resonates with the issues identified above – hunger, trauma and absent-mindedness.

These challenges, which were corroborated by pupils, played an inhibitive role in their efforts to cooperate with their headteachers and teachers who were doing everything to help them develop into holistic and successful citizens. As AS3 remarked: “Like me, you will hear many pupils say that they prefer to stay in the school than home because of what we go through at home; the running of errands, violence, pain, and discouragements are just too much”. This is consistent with the literature in chapter 2 which elaborates that child labour competes for or interferes with access to schooling and effective learning (Awedoba et al.,

2003; GSS, 2016). These poverty-related issues unavoidably creep into the fabric of the leading, teaching and relational activities in the school with inhibiting influences on the process of instilling the spirit of the LfL principles.

My research data indicated that illiteracy is closely related to poverty and this resonates with the views of Maliki (2011) and GSS (2015). In chapter 6, I explained that majority of parents of the research schools are illiterate fisherfolk who spend most of their time fishing in the Atlantic Ocean. A good number of the illiterate parents, according to views expressed in the research data, either do not appreciate the importance of formal education or are ensnared in a fatalistic feeling that formal education is for the privileged few. Thus, regarding cooperating with the school, they are not forthcoming, and in some cases, they are complicit in terms of conniving with their children to peddle lies that will help to keep the pupils' out of school so that they can go around selling items. At home, such parents hardly had time for the pupils' learning because in their view, the world outside the school is not for learning. This is in contradiction with research evidence that parental/community cooperation is crucial for learning outside the walls of the schools (MacBeath & Dempster, 2009; Donkor, 2010).

However, there is evidence in the data, small as the proportion may be, that the most frequent visits to the research schools to offer support were made by an illiterate parent (AP2) of school A. She visited the school 4 times a week and was always present for any activity that required parental presence. Thus, while it cannot be refuted that illiteracy has played a role in inhibiting the LfL principles, it is important to be aware of a few exceptions.

#### *Unemployed school graduates and the snare of fatalism*

A cursory review of the literature that attempts to define education – UNESCO (1974), Anamuah-Mensah's (2002) Education Review Report on Ghana's education, and Delors et al. (1996), suggests there is a linkage of education to the culture of lifelong learning and the development of occupational skills and attitudes for the conscious development of individuals and nations. In other words, the goals of education have cognitive, psychomotor, economic, and citizenship or character dimensions. Nonetheless, in many countries in Africa including Ghana, the main reason why parents, especially poor parents, enrol their children in school is that upon completion they will be gainfully employed to support themselves and their families. Otherwise, as Awedoba et al.'s (2003) research discovers, parents who do not anticipate such gains will not enrol their children in school. Every single parent and pupil I asked for the reason for pupils' being in schools gave answers relating to economic reasons such as 'so that they can become lawyers, teachers, doctors, and nurses and earn income to

support themselves and the family'. For these people to wake up each day and observe at all points of their compass the ubiquity of unemployed, fatalistic, and desperate school graduates has not only impacted negatively on their readiness to prioritise learning but makes them question the whole essence of formal education.

The LfL principles emphasise pupil, professional, school and community learning (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009; MacBeath et al., 2018) through collaborative dialogue, sharing of leadership and accountability. Any such social attitudes listed above can only depress these processes of incorporating the LfL principles. As most of the teachers argued, unemployment is an issue because the quality of education is poor. That means, the graduates the system churns out are short of the skills recognised as quality education by GSS's (2013) definition. Regardless of the truth of this the reality is that the youth unemployment rate is high, and it is a serious development issue as the Ministry of Employment (2014) acknowledges and confirmed by Ghana Statistical Service (2015) which emphasises it in its National Employment Report. Despite the one-sided inhibitive effect of unemployment on the incorporation of the LfL principles, modern technology was both promotive and inhibitive.

### **Modern technology is both incentive and inhibitive to school improvement initiatives**

The sweeping wave of modern technology, exemplified in mobile phones (Singh, 2009; Versi, 2010), telenovelas (Touré, 2007; Adia, 2014; Mante, 2016), information centres, computer games and sports bets centres (Tolchard, Glozah, & Pevalin, 2014) has been phenomenal across sub-Saharan Africa. While it was apparent from the data that these technologies are familiar to stakeholders, and with varying scale of effects, the revelation is that the effects are both promotive and inhibitive to the incorporation of the LfL programme.

#### *Mobile phones*

In a three-country – Ghana, Malawi and South Africa empirical study that considers youth, mobility and mobile phones, Porter et al. (2012) state that there has been astronomical expansion, spatial penetration and speed of adoption of mobile phones in sub-Saharan Africa particularly since 2007. Considering that this research has Ghana as one of its focal points, I focus on it to get a better picture of the reality of mobile phone usage and its impacts especially on young people. In the two agro-ecological zones of Ghana – Cape Coast representing the coastal zone, and Sunyani, the forest zone which were the focus of the research, Porters et al. (2012) conclude that for most young people (9-18 years), access to



mobile phones is a vital part of everyday life. The allowance for the installing of social media applications – WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter make the mobile phones great virtual social spaces for interaction and learning. It is within this understanding that the positive and negative impacts of mobile technology on change implementation emerge. As the narrative in chapter 10 shows, stakeholders especially teachers and pupils maximise this technology to improve collaborative networking, teaching and learning. This is a great resource that facilitates student, professional, school and system learning which is emphasised by Swaffield and MacBeath (2009). I also understand from the data that pupils use the Internet on their teachers' and parents' mobile phones to search for relevant information to do their assignments, learn new scientific terms, and to improve their vocabularies. This is what Aker and Mbiti (2010) refer to as mobile-learning, which aligns with the LfL's emphasis on learning from 'everywhere, everyone and everything'.

On the flip side, imprudent use, addiction, time wastage, lure and exposure to dangerous video sites which can weaken the moral muscle the schools are trying to grow in the pupils are evidently noted in the data. Much as imprudent use of mobile technology, especially WhatsApp, applies to both teachers (mostly in school) and pupils (at home/in the community), the concern is more directed to teachers.

While it might be beneficial to conduct, if possible, a nation-wide research on the issue of teachers' use of mobile phones during work hours, what is clear, according to my research data, is that it is a reality in the research schools. To the extent that WhatsApp, for example, isolates teachers from interacting adequately with colleagues in the schools contradicts the LfL spirit which calls for concerted efforts to effectively and efficiently use every resource or opportunity to make the school environment favourable for learning (Dempster & Bagakis, 2009).

Some pupils, as the interview data show also spend between 5-6 hours a day on social media platforms chatting with friends or downloading and watching videos which have the propensity to affect their moral health. Thus, not only does spending such long hours chatting on topics which have no bearing on their relevant learning constitute a waste of time but it simply depresses the processes of getting them to prioritise learning. As has been reported in diverse contexts including Nigeria (Smith, 2006); Uganda (Burrell, 2010), South Africa, Ghana and Malawi (Porter et al., 2012), mobile phones are a potential lure, enticement or instrument of control, particularly of young girls by men for sex. This is in line with my research finding although the evidence from the research shows that mobile phones are used as a tool to lure both sexes – young adult girls and boys alike especially the poor, by those

who wield strong financial muscle. This is because possessing a mobile phone is purported to boost their social status in the slums. Porter et al. (2012) observe that mobile phones symbolise success and high status in the cities, and because they are more manageable gifts in terms of size and cost (Slater & Kwami, 2005), they become good tools to trap young adults for amoral and anti-learning activities.

### *The invading presence and pull effect of telenovelas*

Soap operas or telenovelas as they are known in Ghana and Latin America, are primetime serial fictions whose distinctiveness is anchored on their strong ties to the culture and language of their countries of production (Tufte, 2005). The flow of these fictional television genres, as La Pastina and Straubhaar (2005) state, has transcended cultural-linguistic markets to become transnational export hits. Mostly produced in North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America, telenovelas have conquered emotional, social, and entertainment spaces of many Ghanaians. The ubiquity of telenovelas and their double-edged sword effect on the LfL change implementation efforts cannot be overemphasised. On questions I asked relating to factors outside the school walls which influence pupils' learning, every single participant mentioned telenovelas as my own opportunistic community-level observations attest. Irrespective of the nature of impact, it was apparent from the data that the ability for television channels to 'indigenise' the foreign telenovelas has been a crucial factor for their pervasive presence in Ghana. Straubhaar (1998) observes that when there is cultural proximity regarding the way telenovelas are packaged, they are readily received by their viewers. This process of adjusting and modifying the genres to local styles, Buonanno (2006) refers to as *indigenizzazione*. Such an approach, according to La Pastina and Straubhaar (2005), seizes the emotions of audiences to the point of melodrama.

Findings of recent empirical studies on telenovelas in Ghana by Adia (2014) and Mante (2016) resonate with the above dynamics and confirm my research findings. In an ethnographic research that studies the popularity of foreign telenovelas and viewer perception, Adia (2014) states that many men, women and children in Ghana watch these genres because they are translated into the local language. This, I think, is partly because many illiterate Ghanaians are enthralled to see for example, Indian characters play their roles linguistically through the medium of *twi*, the most widely spoken Ghanaian language. Recently, Mante (2016) conducted a case study for her MA thesis in the University of Ghana and focused on the Indian telenovela – *Kukum Bhagya*, the most viewed telenovela in Ghana. She discovered that 91 per cent of the participants patronise this telenovela because the

medium of language has been translated from the original language into twi. This linguistic adaptation of telenovelas, according to Mante is so prevalent that it has now led to a new lexicon of 'Twinovela'.

It is clear from the data as well as literature that the ubiquity and wide viewer appreciation of telenovelas are indisputable. But in which way can these be perceived in terms of their role on pupils' learning, dialogues, and sharing of leadership and accountability? The data suggest that the effects of telenovelas are both promotive and inhibitive.

From the positive perspective, telenovelas contribute to pupils' growth in confidence, character, public speaking, and integral development. Most of the pupils stated that the telenovelas help to broaden their scope of thinking and worldviews because they enable them to learn many things about other cultures and handle difficult situations maturely. These revelations summarise the positive role of telenovelas in two ways: first, they contribute to cultural, affective and cognitive learning; second, they are a medium through which pupils can build their identities. The findings of Mante's (2016) case study are consistent with the first view regarding learning. These genres, according to Adia (2014) can be useful mechanisms through which viewers construct and reconstruct their personal identities. This is crucial for adolescents whose identity is in the process of construction because telenovelas provide values, images, rituals, symbols and models that act as reference points for their personal and group perceptions. As the data from the school-wide observations, especially pupils during break hours reveal, the telenovelas enable them to cultivate, nurture, and reinforce self-esteem, reflectivity, and meaning-making. For some of the people, a mere watching of these stories provides entertainment, relaxation, and gratification (Stern, Russell, & Russell, 2005). The data reveal that some teachers gain insights from the telenovelas to adapt teaching pedagogies that appeal to pupils, for example, role play.

Despite these promotive effects, telenovelas can cause viewer addictions and havoc to family peace. There were extreme cases, where families broke apart because of addiction to these programmes. The seeds of learning, collaboration and accountability that are sown in schools are not watered at home so that they can germinate and grow.

Reflecting on the above inhibitive effects through the lens of current literature, there is some level of resonance. The viewing of television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant (Adia, 2014). This means that the manic levels of attachment to telenovelas by stakeholders especially some pupils can cumulatively cause emotional harm and drain their physical and mental energies which otherwise could have been channelled to their learning. The telenovelas can mislead pupils into thinking that

what they watch is real or culturally acceptable and may want to enact it in their everyday life. Recently, a Ghanaian Educationalist, Abban (2018) in a workshop organised by UNESCO on the sustainable development goals complained that foreign telenovelas are erasing Ghana's culture.

It can be argued that it is not so much the question of the telenovelas but what Ghanaians make of them. But the point being made here is to do with the quantum of and pervading velocity with which foreign telenovelas hit the country; the quantum is phenomenal and velocity irresistibly strong because of politico-economic undertones. Bielby and Harrington (2002) talk of a situation where the leading exporter of these television programmes is the superpower, the United States, which uses them as a medium of promoting its political, cultural and economic agenda. No wonder, as Tobin (2002) remarks, the American soap opera – 'Bold and beautiful' reaches an estimated 300 million viewers in 110 countries daily, including Ghana.

Perhaps, the deeper concerns are the contents of the programmes. A critical look at all the telenovelas shown on the Ghanaian media are those with the theme of romantic love (Adia, 2014) including the most viewed Kumkum Bhagya. The challenge with these love-laden genres is that they slowly but cumulatively reconfigure the minds of the pupils who are mostly adolescents to think life is about practising erotic love. As the data reveal, some of the pupils acknowledge they are usually tempted to practise what they watch from the telenovelas. In other words, their sexual urges are encouraged, and as can be deduced, contracting diseases, teenage pregnancies, and dropping out of schools are some of the likely consequences. These realities negatively affect the successful incorporation of the LfL ideals.

#### *Local community information, betting and computer games centres.*

The phenomenon of local community information centres is new, and there is hardly any literature on such a development. This notwithstanding, the research data show that these centres are a cheap medium for disseminating news to the inhabitants in the local language. Nonetheless, they produce penetratingly excessive noise that frustrates pupils' learning at home. In homes where adolescents are lonely or experience disharmony with parents, the excessive noise from these centres is a good excuse for them to spend their time at the sports betting and computer games centres.

Findings from a quantitative research conducted by Tolchard, Glozah and Pevalin (2014) on attitudes towards gambling among Ghanaian adolescents shows that gambling, especially sports betting, is common in Ghana. With the legalisation of gambling by the Gaming

Commission of Ghana (GCG) established under the Gaming Act 2006 (Act 721), there has been a proliferation of gambling activities. There is a strong view among the Ghanaian adolescents that gambling is a positive experience and a possible way out of poverty (Tolchard et al., 2014). This is consistent with my research findings where many pupils perceive betting as a quick fix to poverty. They understood betting centres as spaces for socialisation, entertainment, and knowledge generation. Sports betting, according to some of the pupils and teachers, involves a complicated process of thinking which is helpful in sharpening the analytical skills and logical reasoning of the pupils. Therefore, betting helps to promote pupils' learning outside the school.

Similarly, computer games centres are credited by pupils for helping to eliminate boredom, refresh their brains and lift their spirits. The centres also provide a medium for some pupils to get a first hand practical feel for computers and their basic operations, and thus, open the pupils to relevant knowledge.

Nevertheless, I understand from the data that these centres were frustrating the schools' efforts to incorporate the LfL ideals by promoting addiction, a culture of disobedience, truancy, drug abuse, thievery, lies, and criminality among some of the pupils. Additionally, the sports gamblers spend long hours there, sometimes, throughout the night and either do not attend school the next morning or do so late and tired. The issue of pupil gamblers being likely to be socialised into irregular meal times coupled with drinking and smoking is a reality Tolchard et al. (2014) identified. Given that these pupils are young (between ages 9-17), irregular nutrition is likely to affect their proper growth and effective learning. This may have underpinned Tolchard et al's conclusion that such adolescents have high stress levels which impact negatively on their overall learning outcomes. As the LfL principles aim to build pupils into holistic citizens, a culture of truancy, criminality, and disobedience can only at best be counterproductive.

Therefore, modern technology must be consumed with care. As both Hattie's (2009) meta-studies and Cuban's (2013) historical analysis indicate, there is no positive relationship between technology and student achievement. A similar realisation may have inspired Fullan's (2016) recommendation that in pursuance of school-level change, pedagogy should be made the driver and technology the accelerator. It was clear from my research that different forms of modern technology – mobile phones, telenovelas, sports betting and computer gaming were incentives as well as inhibitors to pupils' learning.

## **Summary**

Chapter 11 was the medium through which I put my research findings (six analytic themes) into dialogue with literature. Looking at the corpus of literature on conceptualising leadership, learning, dialogue, accountability and change implementation at school or system level, there was a considerable degree of resonance with the research findings. It was clear from the literature that familiarity with and shared meaning of the key concepts or principles of any innovation; the ability to re-orient mindsets of the potential consumers of the innovation and creating structures that enable collaborative action are crucial processes for successful change implementation. Once people's attitudes are oriented towards an innovation, it spurs motivation and nurtures cordial relationships which collectively unleash their creativities and productive energies. In this way, effects of household poverty, illiteracy, unemployment can be mitigated and managed profitably. Similarly, modern technology is a reality with double-edged sword effects of being promotive and inhibitive to change processes. Like any change process, educational change implementation is a challenging process that takes time and requires collaboration rather than isolated individual heroism. In the next chapter, I consider the implications of this research.

## **Chapter 12. The 'And so what?' question: implications for theory, methodology, policy and practice**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I reflect on the question which every researcher must answer – the ‘And so what?’ question. Put differently, from the lens of theory, policy and practice, is this research project worth the pain? My response is a resounding yes.

### **Theorising the LfL principles**

This study is formulated and implemented within the LfL framework’s five principles, namely: focus on learning, creating conditions favourable for learning, creating a learning dialogue, and sharing leadership and accountability. The principles provided the context for the research questions which enabled me to navigate and direct the research process with the overarching aim of gaining insights into the processes by which the principles were incorporated in Ghana. What the principles represent for and offer to the stakeholders determine their degree and rate of incorporation. Thus, views and experiences of stakeholders especially headteachers, teachers, and pupils expressed through 61 formal semi-structured interviews, a series of informal interviews, 4 focus group discussions, personal observations, and document analysis about the LfL principles provide the empirical basis and data for my theorisation.

### **Leadership for Learning: an audacity-driven theory and practice**

I still recall with a considerable quantum of unease when a parent of the trialling school, a traditional chief, put me on the spot with the question: “Young man, but why do you say Leadership for Learning instead of Learning for Leadership since good leadership is what we need in this country?” It immediately dawned on me that the basis for this question is that one concept is itself in service of the other within the LfL equation. So the word that precedes the preposition ‘for’ that is, leadership is in service of learning which follows it, hence, the concern of the parent who thinks leadership should be served by learning rather than serving it. This is a legitimate concern because the pervading belief in Ghana is that leaders and leadership represent the same thing and leaders are the unmoved movers – they cause everything that happens and have all the solutions to everything. Leadership is associated with power, prestige, old age, and being a male. It is not like learning which is conterminous

with being young, weak, powerless, and about blind consumption of diktats. Therefore, if anything at all, leadership must be served by learning.

In the spirit of the LfL framework, such master-servant conceptualisation is hermeneutically deficient and at variance with its proponents. Responding to the parent's query, I elucidated that in the LfL equation neither leadership nor learning is used to unidirectionally serve the other but are mutually interconnected to enrich their bearers – all of us, who are inescapably leaders and learners. But since the LfL is formulated primarily for educational and school improvement purposes and given that learning must be the main business of schools, the nomenclature, 'Leadership for Learning' makes more sense. This response was appreciated by the parent but then his question reminded me of the importance of being aware of the complexity of conjoining these two already intricate concepts, something I have tried to do in chapter 3.

To then 'marry' these two concepts with the preposition 'for' into the phrasal configuration – Leadership for Learning - obviously has the propensity to inspire interpretational divergences if not 'war' between leadership and learning theorists belonging to different schools of thought. As the proponents of the LfL (MacBeath, Dempster, Frost, Johnson & Swaffield, 2018) in their recent *Strengthening the connections between leadership and learning*, have acknowledged, a decade after the formulation of the LfL, the framework has travelled far and wide but attracted divergent interpretations. It is not only the theoretical framework which is in phrasal form but also its five interrelated pillars are in phrasal configurations woven around learning, leadership, dialogue and accountability. What is intriguing, and it is the basis for the caption, 'audacity-driven theory and practice' is that the proponents refer to the pillars of the LfL framework collectively as 'Leadership for Learning principles'. I am particularly interested in the choice of the word 'principles'.

As hinted above, I focused chapter 3 on developing the critical awareness of leadership, learning and LfL together with its principles for practice. In my view, the noun 'principles' plays a key role in gauging the concrete ways the LfL framework can be a practical theory. According to the Oxford Dictionary Online (Principle, n.d.), a principle denotes "a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behaviour". Taken in this sense, what do LfL principles for practice mean? Are they rules which determine the right way to lead and learn?



## **Meaning of Leadership for Learning principles**

Answers to the above questions are not straightforward because even the proponents of the framework (Swaffield & MacBeath, 2009, p.48) acknowledge that “grasping what LfL means in theory and in practice has been, and will continue to be, a developing narrative”. This position seems not to have changed about a decade on (MacBeath et al., 2018) and gives other researchers including me the leverage to theorise on the meaning of the LfL in varying contexts. From the definition given to the word principles, it can be said that the LfL principles represent a fundamental compass that sets and defines the parameters for action – leading, learning, teaching, engaging in dialogue and being accountable in the context of education especially schools. The navigation instrument – compass is known for its ability to give a sense of direction to its users. Thus, the LfL principles are like a ‘moral compass’. This sense may have underpinned the proponents’ clarification (see chapter 3) that the five principles are not a rigid checklist against which to compare success or failure of practice but rather, statements in which values are embedded, and are sufficiently concrete to enable people to clarify and refine their visions of ideal practice.

Discerning this submission about the LfL principles, it becomes clear that the choice of terms such as statements, concrete values, clarify, refine, and visions constitute the essence of the principles. They are not mere hollow expressions but concrete value-laden statements, and their usefulness is tied to how the values they bear enable those who embrace them to explore their personal and socio-cultural repositories of wisdom to clarify and refine them to facilitate a practice that will yield the most desired results as persons, schools and systems. A discernible strength of this manner of expressing the LfL principles is that they exclude any iota of ideological imposition and strongly canonise the idea of human freedom to accept or reject, maintain or refine what is deemed helpful.

However, statements may be grammatically and syntactically clear as crystal but once they are value-laden, not everyone including pupils and teachers, *prima facie*, may be able to decode those values let alone be enabled to refine visions by them. It was clear in the context of my research that some stakeholders, especially parents were not sure of what the visions of ideal educational practice represent. Even though the idea of vision of ideal practice is not clarified by the LfL proponents, it appears that LfL values including mutual appreciation, valuing and nurturing of every talent, everyone needing to learn something from everyone, everything, and everywhere, play a broader role than helping people to clarify and refine visions. Perceiving the principles as reminders helps the stakeholders to recall, redefine, reconceptualise, and refine ordinary cultural practices they may have forgotten, or neglected

but which are of extraordinary importance in building humane school environments which make leading, teaching and learning easier and fulfilling. Similarly, it might be helpful to add that the principles enable people to define practice anew because they reveal insights which stakeholders may not have known.

### **Leadership for Learning principles through the world of the participants**

In chapter 7 where the LfL principles are analysed in detail, their meaning is clearly captured through the socio-cultural lens of the stakeholders. The terms – reminders and revelations are the lifeblood of the participants' holistic view of the LfL principles. The principles are mutually re-enforcing tools which reveal, to or remind stakeholders of, the importance of daily activities and behaviours necessary for improving schools. Conceptualising the principles as such buttresses their interrelatedness. However, the choice of the words – 'reveal' and 'remind', seems to add new nuances to the meaning box of the principles. These terms have been expressed both in their noun as well as verb forms by the participants. In whichever form these words are embraced, they offer some refreshing insights and challenges to theorising the LfL principles.

#### *The LfL principles as revelations*

When the LfL principles are understood as revelations, the beauty of such a lens is that the principles disclose certain rare values to those who encounter them. For example, as stakeholders of this research expressed, their coming to the realisation of leadership as an activity rather than a position enshrined in an individual, was a revelation to them. Those who encounter the principles as revelations do not have to go through the rigorous process of decoding or interpreting to understand what the principles have on offer. If they are understood as revelations, then it will not be out of place if I describe the principles as ontological values par excellence – values whose mere presence in the schools exudes exemplarity of excellence that makes teachers and pupils embrace them. Every theorist will hope their theories can offer such radiance which bridges the usual theory-practice gulf. Unfortunately, this might only be possible in the world of angels not in the world of humans who receive and interpret ideas like the LfL principles through the haze of their emotional, psychological, economic, socio-cultural, and political baggage. Thus, the principles must be interpreted by the stakeholders according to their personal unique histories and experiences before they can be translated into practice. Thus, perceiving the LfL principles as revelations may make them more of static passive tools whose unique values might not automatically

find their way successfully into stakeholders' ontologies and epistemologies based on mere contact.

Perhaps, theorising the principles through the verb form – reveal will present them as active or action-laden values which can inspire actions in people who embrace them. To reveal something is to disclose, make known or visible that thing through a medium of discourse or communication. This implies that the LfL principles must be internalised and become part of those who embrace them. In this way when the principles are said to reveal or disclose something, it means they do not do so as a reality outside of the human subject. It is this internal rooting of the principles that enables them to disclose certain novel ideals which can inspire their imbibers to reflect, reimage, and redefine certain realities such as what constitutes a school, what activities it entails, who does what and what is the best practice. As the headteachers shared, their reflection on the experiences of the LfL principles inspired imagination and contemplation on realities of their individual and collective practices, schools and the educational system only after they have first digested and assimilated them.

Moreover, as stakeholders shared, it is through the process of reflective and reflexive engagement with the principles that they realised that a school is broader than the physical spaces occupied by teachers and pupils. Rather, it is a melting point for wisdom and knowledge from families, communities and individuals which is processed and used to achieve the schools' moral purpose. Thus, when the LfL principles are understood as relational tools which reveal unique ideas and practices, it might better serve what they stand for than the use of its static noun equivalent of being revelations.

This notwithstanding, what is novel for theorising the LfL principles as revelations is the newness or insights they bring to the equation of educational practices. We often talk of revelation of something only if that reality is new, unique and different from what is commonplace. Even if what is revealed is not altogether new, it often bears concrete, visible characteristics or shows novel ways that add renewal to what has been deemed familiar or routine.

### *The LfL principles as reminders*

The LfL principles are also described as reminders. A reference to the Cambridge Dictionary Online (n.d.), and the Oxford Dictionary Online (n.d.) on the meaning of the noun reminder shows a converging definition of it as a thing for example, a message that reminds someone to do something. Like revelation, if we theorise the LfL principles as reminders, it appears they are static values which are dissociated from or reside outside of people and

automatically send signals or messages to them to act. In practice, such an approach to theorising the principles will make the principles less impacting because we are in an era of human rights. People must volitionally own, embody and make the principles part of their daily life to be able to feel their potency and reminding role. Therefore, it might be more beneficial to theorise the principles as relational dynamics, very much part of people's daily operative philosophies that make them recall or think of their own cultural mores which they may have forgotten or neglected. Anthropologically, the mind is a constituent part of who we are as humans so when the LfL principles remind us, it means they tease our mental faculties into thinking and rethinking, and recalling or remembering our existential realities, histories and cultural experiences and reconnect these with what the principles inspire regarding making schools homes of quality teaching and learning. A strength of this kind of theorisation is that it makes people identify easily with and own the principles since the ideals they themselves are socialised into, are in harmony with those of the LfL principles.

A few examples of parallelisms between some of the LfL-inspired values and Ghanaian cultural values will help to make concrete how the LfL principles remind stakeholders of such values. I use the LfL principle – creating conditions favourable for learning as an example. The principle emphasises the word 'everyone' in myriads of ways: create cultures which enable everyone to learn; physical and social spaces which stimulate and celebrate everyone's learning; and enable everyone to take risks, cope with failure and respond positively to challenges. In short, the principle is about creating environments that make schools a family/community where people can be, relate, share and learn. It stresses solidarity and mutual participation. Synoptically placed, these play well into Ghanaian and African cultural values of the sense of family and community; solidarity or social cohesion and participation; hospitality and sharing; ethical consciousness; the sacredness of life; and respect for the human person.

Similar parallels can be drawn between the values which the principle, focus on learning, stresses. This principle, among other values emphasises holistic learning or education through interplay of cognitive, social, emotional and psychomotor dimensions. The need for pupils to take risks in their learning, be collaborative and resilient are also key values of this principle. In Ghanaian communities, cultural activities such as cultural dancing ensembles, singing, durbars, and stories by the fire side are media through which children develop integrally. Most of the initiation rites or rites of passage in Africa including Ghana aim to teach children the necessity of courage, risk-taking and resilience for a successful adulthood. The requirement of a young person having to kill a lion without using a gun among the Maasai

people of East Africa as a qualification for passage into adulthood is a fitting example of the courage and risk-taking African cultures embed as part of learning and growing up. Moreover, education is a corporate responsibility involving the family – cradle for its initial transmission and later in collaboration with the clan, community and schools. As I can recall, every member of my village contributed to my education through pieces of advice here and there, encouragement, gifts, and disciplinary or correctional applications. It did not have to be only my teachers or parents. These are exactly some of the values the LfL principles encourage. The presence of the principles in individuals and schools gives them a certain connaturality with these socio-cultural realities which enables them to enrich their ideas on achieving quality education.

However, because of myriads of reasons including strong forces of globalisation; consumerism and its attendant insularism and individualism; modern technology; pressure from external high stakes accountability; and the winner takes all mentalities, these socio-cultural values are being forgotten or relegated to dormancy in schools, homes and communities. Schools – headteachers, pupils and teachers, and parents are progressively becoming inward looking, insular, unhealthily competitive rather than being cooperative, and want instant or quick fixes. Commonly tagged as another Western-developed ideal, which is true, the LfL principles are expected to be countercultural impositions. Interestingly, however, as the stakeholders of this research realised, the LfL principles are pro rather than anti-cultural, and thus, functionally remind and inspire stakeholders of the crucial importance of their own cultural values, and to reconnect with them to build schools and systems which can promote quality leadership, teaching, and learning. It is important to realise that values such as collaboration, mutual respect and appreciation, transparency, just to mention a few, which the LfL principles embed, transcend cultural contexts even if the specific strategies of attuning people to them are contextually defined.

Nevertheless, a further lively curiosity about the LfL principles compels me to think that the principles do not only reveal, remind and reconnect (3Rs) people to values but also challenge certain ideologies they hold. I use the word challenge in this context not to denote a kind of combative proselytization of stakeholders from their long-held ideologies but as an idea that provides an alternative way of conceiving leadership, learning, dialogue and accountability. It is a diplomatic relational dynamic that enables the stakeholders to volitionally rise above their ideological walls, and attune themselves to breathe fresh ideas, and approaches to the above activities. In short, by challenging the ideological positions of

their embracers, the principles inspire them to revise, update or renew their views – an act of *aggiornamento*, about leading, relating, learning and accountability.

In Ghana, despite the growing culture of democracy, the undercurrent belief about leadership in the public institutions, including schools point to the leader as a legend of God. Thus, leaders are often viewed to be ordained and seen as divine maestros – God’s earthly representatives. The implications of this are clear: no distinction between a leader and leadership is apparent; gulf between leader and led widens; and leader has all the wisdom and dictates to the led who only receive and act upon instruction, as the pre-LfL era of the research schools exemplified. Additionally, leaders must be older because the older you are, the wiser you are. The younger people must learn because they are yet to be wise. This is the operative philosophy that is culturally nourished and the situation in schools is not different. So, when the LfL principles such as focus on learning reveal that everyone – headteachers, teachers, and pupils must be learners including older ones learning from younger ones, they challenge the above culturally-induced ideologies.

But as I said earlier challenge in this context is linked more to encouraging than attacking. The principles, by nature and function, respect hierarchical structures but at the same time, challenge practitioners to realise that leadership, learning, dialogue, and accountability can be mutually shared according to boundaries, tasks, talents or expertise without undermining the position of the positional leader. However, the activities which relate to the achievement of a school’s set vision should not be locked up within the walls of formal position but rather these traditional walls should be broken down to allow the positional leader to access as well as be accessed by the non-positional leaders to exchange talents to achieve the schools’ moral purposes. It is in this sense I think the LfL principles also challenge their embracers much as they reveal, remind, and reconnect them to helpful insights and experiences. While the theorisation may be a necessary contribution to enriching the knowledge of the Leadership for Learning, the implications of the research through the lens of methodology, policy and practice will help to sufficiently respond to the ‘And so what question’.

### **Implications: methodology, policy and practice**

In this sub-section I reflect on the implications of this study for methodological contributions, policy and practice.

## **Methodological implications**

My in-depth qualitative case study research is not the first on the Leadership for Learning principles in Ghana. As indicated in chapter 1, Jull et al. (2014) had already conducted a quantitative research and Malakolunthu et al.'s (2014) qualitative case study is another. My research builds on these two studies.

However, my 8 months in the field focusing on what can be learned about incorporating the LfL principles through daily conversations and observations has methodological implications some of which I share. Chapter 5 which represents the research implementation provides comprehensive insights into how the research was conducted. It elucidates how I negotiated entry into the research sites, met with stakeholders, fitted into the world of schools, and dealt with power dilemmas in context of power differentials yet ensured that everyone's views were welcome, and both the participants and I mutually embodied and benefited from the process. The research gave the participants a voice and an opportunity to be experts or sources of valuable knowledge on the processes involved in incorporating an innovation. This can be a methodological contribution in the sense that other researchers planning to conduct similar research in Ghanaian basic schools can learn from my approach.

The deployment of a multi-stakeholder approach and multi-data collection instruments such as semi-structured interviews, daily planned and opportunistic observations within and outside the schools, FGDs and documentary analysis resulted in rich data which was thickly described and analysed. This can be another contribution methodologically.

Additionally, and perhaps, more importantly, I developed a coding scheme which can be used to gauge the practices of the LfL principles in classrooms. The classroom community and what goes on there during lessons is crucial because, as research about effective educational system change internationally (Levin & Fullan, 2008; Fullan, 2016) concludes, the heart of sustained improvement in student achievements lies in the teaching and learning practices in the classrooms.

I have consistently made explicit that this research is anchored on the LfL principles, which have sub-principles. These constitute my reference point in seeking insights into the processes of incorporating the principles. But as Brause (2000) states in *Writing your doctoral dissertation: invisible rules for success*, one of the goals of academic research is to discover knowledge. Thus, as I listened to, and observed the research participants especially their conceptualisations of the LfL principles and the way they practise them, insights emerged inductively, which I believe could enrich or provide a concrete way to gauge the

principles in classroom contexts. The table below matches the inductively generated descriptors with the LfL principles.

**Table 12.1 LfL principles and descriptors for classroom observations**

<b>LfL principles</b>	<b>Participant-driven insights on concrete indicators to gauge the distribution and practice of the LfL principles in classrooms</b>
Focus on learning	Pupils and teacher enthusiasm for learning and teaching; mutual encouragement; pupils and teacher behaviour; teacher professionalism; presenting teaching and learning activities; time management; and mastery of subject
Creating favourable conditions for learning	Pupils' regular attendance and punctuality; teacher regular attendance and punctuality; atmosphere upon teacher's arrival; atmosphere during the lesson; atmosphere at the end of the lesson
Creating a learning dialogue	Classroom participation; teacher-pupil disposition toward lesson; challenge; support; mutual confidence
Sharing leadership	Opportunity for participation in classroom decisions; opportunity for creativity and talent expression; taking the lead according to task; recognition and appreciation of different experiences and talents; teaming with different pupils and groups; nurturing of freedom of expression and taking responsibility
Sharing accountability	Pupils' responsiveness to class exercises; giving and assessing exercises; responsible handling of teaching and learning materials; attention to evidence rather than hearsay; evaluation of classroom ethos; attention to sustainability and leaving legacy

I should emphasise that the above descriptors are not a new set of sub-principles of the LfL principles. They are only mirrors emanating from the stakeholders' conversations which I believe further enrich the clarity of the principles in practice. They compare favourably with MacBeath et al.'s (2018) four fields of endeavour – implementing leadership as practice, divergent thinking about learning and teaching, embracing professional integrity, and enhancing professionalism. These fields of treasures of education, like the inductively generated descriptors in table 12.1, contribute to ascertaining the degree to which the LfL principles have become part of headteachers, teachers and pupils' leading, teaching and learning life. Each of the descriptors is defined in appendix 10 and based on how closely they are exhibited in the classroom, they are rated and scored as outstanding (5), very good (4), good (3), satisfactory (2) or poor (1). Based on the definitions and rating, it is possible to code the trends of practice using the coding grid in appendix 11. I believe the coding scheme I have developed can contribute to methodological literature especially in terms of classroom observation of the LfL principles as well as the concepts of learning, dialogue, leadership and accountability. Thus, this research contributes incrementally to the accumulated corpus of methodological knowledge.



## **Policy and practice implications**

### *For policy formulation*

This research was undertaken in two poor coastal urban public basic schools which have successfully incorporated the LfL principles and so the findings should relate to the contextual particularities of these schools. Nonetheless, it is possible to relate the implications to policy and practice spaces in Ghana beyond the jurisdiction of the two schools. Firstly, the participants' new conceptualisation of the individual person, family and community as constitutive aspects of a school is something policy formulators can consider in formulating the concept of a school. It is clear from the research that the formation of shared beliefs in the research schools, which contributed to their success in inculcating the LfL principles is linked to this new reconceptualization of a school. It did not only open the doors of the 'school' to parents and other stakeholders but engendered, at least, teachers to push the agenda of helping parents and communities to transform homes and communities into spaces of learning. The broad conceptualisation of a school also contributed to building cordial interpersonal relationships, networking, and motivation of stakeholders.

Despite these benefits associated with the broad conception of a school, it appears that policy formulators still hold the old narrow understanding of a school as that separate physical space with buildings where teachers and pupils spend many hours teaching and learning. This view was confirmed in an interaction I had with Ghana's current Education Minister and a delegation he led to the University of Cambridge in January 2018 to seek technical support and partnership to improve Ghana's education. After sharing my research findings with them, it was clear to me that they were still considering families and communities as peripheral aspects of a school but given the crucialness of approaching educational reforms through this holistic understanding of what constitute a school, I strongly justified the need for them to consider it in policy formulation. Such a holistic definition that makes homes and communities key aspects of a school when emphasised in policy documents can be one way of addressing the issue of lack of parental cooperation, which emerged as one of the major challenges to successful change implementation efforts in schools. In a comparative analysis of the universal primary education policy in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda, Nishimura et al. (2009) identified parental cooperation as key to the success of this policy and recommended mutual consultation and accountability between governments, schools and parents/communities.

Secondly, the finding that modern technology – mobile phones (Versi, 2010), telenovelas (Mante, 2016), sport betting and computer games centres (Tolchard et al., 2014) are ubiquitous and offer doubled-edged effects on efforts aimed at quality education delivery, calls for inter-sectoral or Ministerial collaboration to formulate policies which can harness the best benefits from these technological packages. There is particularly the need for the National Media Commission, Gaming Commission, Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to work together for this purpose. The untamed proliferation of the above programmes and centres is axiomatic of either lack of clear policy or weak regulatory structures.

Thirdly, the participants of this research resonate that the success of incorporating the LfL principles is linked to taking advantage of the motivated stakeholders, especially teachers who are committed to their profession and yearn for change that will improve the quality of education. This revelation implies that the formulation and implementation of any success-bound educational policies in Ghana may need to take into cognisance the motivation and positive perceptions (Levin & Fullan, 2008; Fullan, 2016) of its consumers especially the headteachers and teachers.

Fourthly, the participants' revelation that ubiquity of youth unemployment and its associated effects of fatalism, despair and discouragement of students from concentrating on learning should be a serious concern for all stakeholders of education especially policymakers. Research findings from the Ministry of Employment (2014), Ghana Statistical Service (2015) and Institute of Economic Affairs (2018) agree that youth unemployment is a national development challenge. Recently, GhanaWeb (2018) carried a distressing news story of a University of Cape Coast graduate who committed suicide because of frustration at the lack of work for 3 years after graduation. The fact that the frustration of graduate youth unemployment was strongly expressed by the participants, especially parents who are losing faith in formal education, should be a wake-up call for all to the danger this is posing to the future of Ghana's education. To borrow the wisdom of the Chinese thinker and social philosopher Confucius who said that "if your plan is for one year plant rice; if your plan is for ten years plant trees; if your plan is for one hundred years educate children"<sup>17</sup>, I think Ghana's plan is beyond one hundred years. It must therefore, be relentless in building a robust educational system which adequately educates the citizenry. Thus, the high levels of youth unemployment call for a serious look at the quality of the educational system especially

---

<sup>17</sup> The quote is taken from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/79127-if-your-plan-is-for-one-year-plant-rice-if>

the school curriculum, and politics around the policy of job creation and accessibility. Otherwise, pupils and parents will continue to query rhetorically and dangerously, ‘what is the point of investing time, energy and money in formal education if in the end the graduates cannot even fend for themselves?’

### *For practice*

The findings of this research also offer insights which can be practicable in other schools. As the case study schools have amply proved, communal belief formation can help to rebrand a school, and give its members direction, renewed vigour and spur them to creativity and collaborative action (Hattie, 2015; Fullan, 2016). Like other public basic schools, these schools do not have adequate supply for their teaching and learning needs. But because they have formed their own beliefs such as ‘Together we can do it’ they have experienced unleashing of ideas and creativities such as ‘every gift counts’, ‘school-level parenting’, and ‘school-family visitation’ projects which have engendered improvements in leadership, relationships, and learning. A concrete example of the importance of communal belief formation can be cited in the success of inclusive education in school B where piloting inclusive education by incorporating special learning needs children – visually-impaired and autistic into this mainstream school, like others, initially was met with fierce resistance from some stakeholders because of the stigma Ghanaian society attaches to such disabilities. It is important to note that the headteacher attributed the success of this to the ability to get all stakeholders to formulate and embrace the new philosophy of leaving no one behind and celebrating the dignity and gifts of every child.

Another related practice other schools can learn from the research schools is the philosophy of recognising, appreciating and harnessing schools’ internal human resources (MacBeath & Dempster, 2009). As headteacher AHT shared with a colleague of a neighbouring poor basic school who wanted to know the underlying drivers of the phenomenal improvement in the school, he simply advised him to recognise, believe in, and harness the internal human resources of the school, especially the teachers and pupils.

Finally, the research schools have strongly and consciously promoted the idea of non-positional leadership (Bangs & Frost, 2015) which has inspired everyone to see themselves as leaders. This has engendered self-initiatives ranging from wanting to be exemplary to proposing and undertaking practical initiatives as leaders. As it emerged from both schools, 85 per cent of the initiatives and creativities which have helped to improve the schools came

from teachers and pupils. Examples include the idea of ‘silent hour’, and ‘every gift counts’ initiatives. These can be practised in other schools where they are not already in use.

## **Summary**

This chapter has offered some perspectives – revelations, reminders, reconnections, and challenges (3RsC) through which the Leadership for Learning principles can be theorised by scholars, policymakers, and practitioners within Ghana and perhaps, internationally.

Implications of the research for methodology, policy and practice especially within the Ghanaian basic school context have also been considered.

## Chapter 13. Summary and conclusions

### Summary

I set out in this research to contribute to empirically-informed understanding of the processes of successful incorporation of the Leadership for Learning principles in two poor urban basic schools in Ghana. The LfL literature I discussed in chapter 2 reveal the LfL Ghana programme has positively influenced leadership capacities of headteachers, the quality of stakeholder collaboration and teaching and learning. However, the literature has been silent on the daily processes which engendered the improvements. I argue that it is important to understand these processes because they could add to the pool of knowledge on leadership, learning and educational change implementation. They could also be shared with practitioners to improve practice and with policymakers to enrich educational policies towards the achievement of equitable quality basic education. Filling this research gap with the hope of the above contributions inspired this study.

My research demonstrates that to get a better understanding of these processes, it is important to seek the perceptions of headteachers, teachers and pupils of the LfL principles (RQ1); how they practised them (RQ2), and the factors which promoted (RQ3) or inhibited (RQ4) their enculturation. Without interacting and conversing with these stakeholders and parents, PTA and SMC chairs, and circuit supervisors, I would not have been able to achieve the research objective. Engaging the participants daily during the fieldwork also enabled me to appreciate the ethics of interacting with them, and research as an exercise for rich learning and knowledge discovery. Individual semi-structured interviews and FGDs enabled me to gather the participants' views. Observations helped me to gain more direct access to events and behaviours in and outside the schools to corroborate as well as extend the views emanating from the interviews and FGDs. Analysis of relevant documents enabled further corroboration of the data from the other techniques.

Findings from my research suggest that change implementation involves a complex web of views, ideologies and relationships within and outside the schools. However, the ability of the stakeholders to have shared perception of the LfL principles enabled them to re-orient attitudes and re-create structures which inspired communal embrace of the principles. The attitudinal and structural changes spurred collaborative actions which served as a lever for the change implementation. I also found out that motivation and cordial relationships can, to some extent, overcome paucity of infrastructure and mitigate the negative effects of

household poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. It emerged that modern technology was promotive as well as inhibitive to the LfL incorporation efforts. Reflecting on the relationship between these findings and literature on system/school change implementation, leadership, and learning, I draw some conclusions and implications of the research.

## **Conclusions**

In drawing the conclusions, I bring together the key findings. As stated above, four interrelated questions were posed to address my research objective. The first question was an epistemological question: ‘What do headteachers, teachers, and pupils in LfL schools in Ghana understand by the LfL principles? To this question, it could be said that the participants had a shared perception of the LfL principles as interrelated tools that reminded or revealed insights which enabled them to improve the quality of leading, teaching and learning.

The second research question, ‘How have headteachers, teachers, and pupils put the LfL principles into practice?’ is a pragmatic question, and it was answered in chapter 8. The shared understanding enabled participants to re-orient their attitudes and re-create structures, which attuned them to collaborative action of enculturating the principles. Communal formation of beliefs has inspired efficacy, co-agency, resilience and creativity. By engaging the various strategies which the research schools deployed in practising what they believe and teach, I discovered that it is the collaborative group that accelerates change. This realisation confirms my prior bias for collaboration as key to successful change implementation.

The third and fourth research questions were also practical questions: ‘How have personal, socio-cultural, political, and economic factors promoted or inhibited the incorporation of the principles?’ These questions are answered in chapter 10. The stakeholders were conscious of these factors and categorised them into opportunities to be seized and threats to be mitigated. The opportunities included availability of professionally competent, intrinsically motivated and committed individuals who yearn for positive change. Although there were other stakeholders who showed indifference in the beginning, I understand that in a context where stakeholders have a shared vision and meaning of what they want to do, they own it communally and mutually motivate one another. Like motivation, cordial interpersonal relationships, often characterised by kindness, trust, and mutual sensitivity engendered mutual sharing of talents in the schools. The competence, motivation and cordial interpersonal relationships helped the schools to overcome quite considerably, the paucity of

physical infrastructure, which was one of the major inhibitive factors to implementing the LfL principles.

The most inhibitive factors to the incorporation of the principles though were household poverty, illiteracy and youth unemployment. The inhibitive role of household poverty is linked to the inability of families to provide decent housing, adequate food, teaching and learning materials for their children. Thus, these children arrive in school unkempt and hungry. This affects their physical, mental, emotional and social well-being and ability to learn effectively.

I discovered from the data that most illiterate parents do not cooperate with the schools to provide quality learning. Parental/community cooperation is important for successful learning both inside and outside the walls of schools and so lack of it was considered a threat to the effective institutionalisation of the LfL ideals.

Apart from these, it emerged that modern technology exemplified in mobile phones and social media like WhatsApp, Facebook; telenovelas, and sports betting and computer centres played promotive as well as inhibitive roles to the LfL-driven change. Whereas modern technology is credited for providing a medium for learning, entertainment, relaxation, and escape from boredom, its propensity to get pupils addicted and exposed to criminality, and cultural confusion reveals its inhibitive role to enculturating the LfL principles.

## **Implications**

I have tried to carry out this research in such a way that it has implications for knowledge generation, policy, practice, and future research.

### **Theoretical and practical knowledge generation**

The content of this research embeds richness which when interpreted descriptively, epistemologically, pragmatically and critically, can contribute to enriching the existing corpus of knowledge in leadership, learning and change implementation. The in-depth qualitative research tells a multi-voice/source story of how two poor schools have successfully incorporated the LfL principles despite daunting socio-cultural, political, ideological and economic challenges. Epistemologically, it reveals how the stakeholders theorise the principles as relational tools that reveal, remind, reconnect stakeholders to and challenge them on ordinary, perhaps forgotten cultural values, which can be of extra ordinary importance to the pursuit of quality education. This does not only extend or enrich the

definitional equation of leadership, learning, dialogue and accountability, especially in the context of the LfL framework, but also how people can use concepts to humanise, nurture and empower the ethos of schools.

In Ghana where the idea of a school receives the conventional narrow interpretation as a place apart from homes and communities where headteachers, teachers and students ‘colonise’, discovering from this research that the stakeholders conceived a school broadly to include the individual person, homes and communities as its constituent parts is enriching. This conceptualisation might not be novel in other contexts but in the basic schools’ contexts of Ghana where the majority of parents are illiterates, it is.

Similarly, I argue that stakeholders’ views about leadership, dialogue and accountability, extend the epistemologies that underpin these terminologies. For example, the use of the metaphor of ‘golf club’ by the participants to capture the contextually sensitive nature of leadership practice as explained in chapter 7, enriches the knowledge box of leadership. Socio-culturally, the tone of conversations between people in Ghana depends inter alia, on age, experience, gender, and social/economic status. It is common to witness people being rude and combative to others or ignore their ideas if they feel the other person is less experienced or occupies lower socio-economic status. However, because the research schools conceptualised dialogue as relationship for learning, it became a new perspective for conceptualising and practising dialogue. When participants also theorised accountability as fidelity to stewardship and mutual self-availing for stock-taking for improvement rather than linking it to the narrow understanding of balancing ledgers and getting pupils to pass examinations, I argue that this is something that adds to knowledge.

If read through a pragmatic lens, it is possible to understand the practical steps the research schools undertook to attune their stakeholders to the ideals of the LfL principles. It includes how participants seized opportunities and mitigated challenges through individual as well as collective creativities including the mantra of ‘leave no one behind’, ‘we can do it’, and the ‘school-level parenting’ initiative to enculturate the LfL-driven change innovation.

From a critical lens, it is easy to contemplate how the existential factors including household poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and technology affect participants, and how that limits their capacities and readiness to collaborate with schools to provide equitable quality education through improved leadership, teaching and learning. Apart from these, there are methodological implications.



### **Methodological knowledge generation**

In chapter 12, I have argued that the way the research was conducted created methodological knowledge. I explain, among other things, my ability to access the schools and deal with power dilemmas in the context of power differentials that gave every participant space, voice, and opportunity to be experts and valuable sources of information on school change implementation, and beneficiaries of the research. The coding scheme I have developed for classroom lesson observation whose content is largely based on the views of the participants about the LfL principles is also found in chapter 5. Despite its limitations, the fact that these ideas are generated based on practitioners' contextual experiences of the LfL principles offer new ideas. Additionally, the strategy of weekly alternation between the two schools to gather data was something that enabled me to take issues emerging from one setting to another for verification and comprehensive understanding. It is in considering these that I argue my approach contributes to methodological knowledge. But the research also has policy and practice implications.

### **Enriching policy**

Regarding policy enrichment, the research contributes in four ways. Firstly, the participants' new conceptualisation of the individual person, family and community as constitutive rather than peripheral aspects of a school is worth consideration when policymakers conceptualise the idea of school.

Secondly, the doubled-edged effects my research reveals of the ubiquitous technological packages, especially social media, telenovelas, sports betting and computer gaming centres implies that there is the need for multi-sectoral or Ministerial collaboration to formulate policies which can harness the best benefits of these realities.

Thirdly, the implementation of government as well as school-initiated programmes to improve education needs to start from positive premises or perceptions rather than from discrediting the very consumers of the policies.

Fourthly, the ubiquity of youth unemployment and its associated effects of fatalism and desperation works against the success of efforts directed at quality education provision. This is dangerous to a growing country like Ghana which needs a robust education system and effective utilisation of its human capital. Thus, creating jobs or providing opportunity for their creation for the youth needs serious attention in policy deliberations.

### **Enkindling practice**

Other schools can emulate the communal belief formation which has helped the research schools to rebrand themselves, and gave their members direction, renewed vigour and spurred them to creativity and collaborative action that has and is improving the schools. The practice of recognising, appreciating and harnessing the schools' internal human capital can be a source of internal strength and resilience for schools against external negative factors in their self-improvement projects as the research schools have and are experiencing. This can be emulated. Conscious promotion of the idea of non-positional leadership can inspire everyone to see themselves as leaders. This is something other schools can learn.

### **Opening windows to future research**

When I reviewed literature about Ghana on modern technology such as mobile phones, telenovelas, sports betting, computer gaming, and the local information centres, I recognised a research gap on the relationship between them and quality education delivery in basic schools. The phenomenon of social media usage such as WhatsApp and teacher productivity and community building in basic schools is something that is worth exploring so that appropriate regulations can be implemented regarding their usage. Available literature on telenovelas is also silent on their relationship to teacher pedagogical adaptation and development and pupils' learning and is worth exploring. These submissions show the different implications of this research which hint that the research was worth the effort

### **Work worth the pain**

Despite the limitations of this research, I am delighted to have conducted it because I enjoyed every step of it right from the initial conceptualisation through to its design and implementation. Having the opportunity to live in the same geographical context with the stakeholders, be with them daily in the schools and experiencing what they experienced especially the dust, the scorching sun rays, eating with them, provided one of the richest learning experiences which I will forever relish. Through this research, I have learnt that the two schools succeeded in incorporating the LfL principles because they embraced four action verbs – know/understand, believe, teach, and practise. The stakeholders understood the LfL principles based on their own contexts, believed in their understanding, taught what they believed, and practised what they taught. Moreover, the generosity with which stakeholders shared their wisdom and their resilient commitment to improving quality of teaching and

learning is a catalyst for me to go all out after my time in Cambridge to reach out with all I have gained to contribute to the change we all yearn for in Ghana and Africa – robustly working educational systems.

My immediate contributions in this occurred when I shared my research findings with Ghana's current Minister of Education and a delegation he led to the University of Cambridge in January 2018, and more recently, with educators in Lagos drawn from Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, and Kenya from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018. I will also continue to share my research findings with other education stakeholders in Africa. I intend to share the findings with UNICEF, Ghana, and the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the University of Cape Coast who are currently collaborating with the Ministry of Education to establish a department for school leadership in the institute. Gazing into the future, I eagerly look forward not only to sharing my hands-on expertise with schools, especially in Ghana and other African countries, to benefit the education systems, but also to put my research skills to use to create knowledge and disseminate it for the good of humanity.

## References

- Abban, E. (2018, February 18). Telenovelas erasing Ghana's culture - Educationist. Retrieved 18 February 2018, from <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Telenovelas-erasing-Ghana-s-culture-Educationist-627263>
- Abbott, P., & Sapsford, R. (1998). *Research methods for nurses and the caring professions* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Acheampong, K. (2004). *WSD status report* (EFA monitoring report). Accra: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from [https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=Ghana+Education+Service+2004+report+on+the+WSD&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws\\_rd=cr&ei=xocHV-6wEciisAHQ-57gDg](https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=Ghana+Education+Service+2004+report+on+the+WSD&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws_rd=cr&ei=xocHV-6wEciisAHQ-57gDg)
- Adami, M. F., & Kiger, A. (2005). The use of triangulation for completeness purposes. *Nurse Researcher*, 12(4), 19–29.
- Adelman, C., Kemmis, S., & Jenkins, D. (1980). Rethinking case study: notes from the second Cambridge conference. In H. Simons (Ed.), *Towards a science of the singular* (pp. 45–61). Norwich: Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia.
- Adia, E. A. (2014). Programme element importance: an analysis of telenovelas in the Ghanaian media. *International Journal of ICT and Management*, 2(1), 96–101.
- Agar, M. H. (1980). *The professional stranger: an informal introduction to ethnography*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Aguri, M. (2012). A report on the impact of LfL in Zeroga primary school, Zebilla in the Bawku West district of the Upper East Region of Ghana. *LfL Ghana Newsletter*, 2(1), 1–4.
- Aker, J. C., & Mbiti, I. M. (2010). Mobile phones and economic development in Africa. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 24(3), 207–232. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.24.3.207>
- Akyeampong, K. (2009). Revisiting free compulsory universal basic education (FCUBE) in Ghana. *Comparative Education*, 45(2), 175–195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060902920534>
- Akyeampong, K., Rolleston, C., Ampiah, J. G., & Lewin, K. M. (2011). *Access, transitions and equity in education in Ghana: researching practice, problems and policy*. Brighton, Sussex: University of Sussex.

- Amakyi, M., & Ampah-Mensah, A. (2013). Preparation of school heads in Ghana: making a case for theoretical knowledge. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(23), 154–158.
- Ampiah, J. G. (2008). An investigation of provision of quality basic education in Ghana: a case study of selected schools in the Central Region. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education*, 11(3), 19–37.
- Anamuah-Mensah, J. (2002). *Meeting the challenges of education in the twenty first century* (Government educational review) (pp. 1–262). Accra: Adwinsa Publications (GH) Ltd.
- Antwi, K. A. (1992). *Education, society and development in Ghana*. Accra: Unimax Publishers Limited.
- Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1996). *Organisational learning II: theory, method and practice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Arnot, M., Casely-Hayford, L., & Chege, F. (2012). Schooling, rights and urban poverty: young people's narratives of citizenship in two sub-Saharan cities. In C. Colclough (Ed.), *Education outcomes and poverty: a reassessment* (pp. 36–54). London: Routledge.
- Atkinson, P., & Delamont, S. (2008). Analytic perspectives. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed., pp. 285–312). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Avotri, R. (2000). *Gender and primary schooling in Ghana*. Brighton: Institute for Development Studies.
- Awedoba, A. K., Yoder, P. S., Fair, K., & Gorin, S. (2003). Household demand for schooling in Ghana. *ORC Macro, Calverton, Maryland USA*, 1–74.
- Bakkenes, I., Vermunt, J. D., & Wubbels, T. (2010). Teacher learning in the context of educational innovation: learning activities and learning outcomes of experienced teachers. *Learning and Instruction*, 20(6), 533–548.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2009.09.001>
- Banaj, S., Burn, A., & Buckingham, D. (2010). *Rhetorics of creativity* (2nd ed.). London: Creativity, Culture and Education.
- Barber, M. (2007). *Instruction to deliver*. London: Politico, Methuen.
- Barrow, R., & Milburn, G. (1990). Learning. *A critical dictionary of educational concepts: an appraisal of selected ideas and issues in educational theory and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 178–184). New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

- Barzanò, G., & Brotto, F. (2008). Leadership, learning and Italy: a tale of atmospheres. In J. MacBeath & Y. C. Cheng (Eds.), *Leadership for Learning: international perspectives* (pp. 223–240). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Bassey, M. (2009). *Case study research in educational settings*. New York: Open University Press.
- Bate, P., Beevan, H., & Robert, G. (2005). *Toward a million change agents: a review of the social movement literature*. London: National Health System.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544–559.
- Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Becker, H. S. (1958). Problems of inference and proof in participant observation. *American Sociological Review*, 23(6), 652–660. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2089053>
- Bell, J., & Waters, S. (2014). *Doing your own research project: a guide for first-time researchers* (6th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Bennell, P., & Akyeampong, K. (2007). *Teacher motivation in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia*. London: DFID.
- Bereiter, C. (1991). Implications of connectionism for thinking about rules. *Educational Researcher*, 20(3), 10–16.
- Berg, R. van den, Sleegers, P., & Pelkmans, T. (2000). Implementation of an innovation: meeting the concerns of teachers. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 26(4), 331–350. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-491X\(00\)00022-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-491X(00)00022-5)
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The social construction of reality*. New York, NY: Anchor Books.
- Bielby, D. D., & Harrington, C. L. (2002). Markets and meanings: the global syndication of television programming. In D. Crane, N. Kawashima, & K. Kawasaki (Eds.), *Global culture: media, arts, policy, and globalization* (pp. 215–232). New York: Routledge.
- Bingham, W. V. (1927). Leadership. In H. C. Metcalf (Ed.), *The psychological foundations of management* (pp. 244–260). New York: Shaw.
- Blackmon, P. (2008). Rethinking poverty through the eyes of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. *International Studies Review*, 10(2), 179–202. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2486.2008.00770.x>

- Boeh-Ocansey, D. (1997). *Ghana's microenterprise and informal sector: bedrock for national development? Perspectives in education, training and other support services*. Accra: Anansesem Publications.
- Bosu, R., Dare, A., Dachi, H., & Fertig, M. (2011). School leadership and social justice: evidence from Ghana and Tanzania. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 31(1), 67–77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2010.05.008>
- Boud, D., & Soler, R. (2016). Sustainable assessment revisited. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(3), 400–413. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2015.1018133>
- Bowden, A. O. (1926). A study of the personality of student leaders in colleges in the United States. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 21(2), 149–160.
- Brause, R. S. (2000). *Writing your doctoral dissertation: invisible rules for success*. London: Falmer Press.
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *Interviews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- British Educational Research Association. (2011). *Ethical guidelines for educational research*. (3rd ed.). London: BERA.
- British Educational Research Association. (2018). *Ethical guidelines for educational research* (4th ed.). London: BERA. Retrieved from [https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-for-Educational-Research\\_4thEdn\\_2018.pdf?noredirect=1](https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-for-Educational-Research_4thEdn_2018.pdf?noredirect=1)
- Bruner, J. S. (1977). *The process of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. S. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bryant, J. (2003). *The six dilemmas of collaboration: inter-organisational relationships as drama* (1st ed.). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bryk, A. S., Lee, V. E., & Holland, P. B. (1993). *Catholic schools and the common good*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: lessons from Chicago*. Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bryman, A. (1996). Leadership in organisations. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational studies* (pp. 276–292). London: Sage.
- Bryman, A., Collinson, D., Grint, K., Jackson, B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (Eds.). (2011). *The sage handbook of leadership*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Bunch, C. (1987). *Passionate politics*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Buonanno, B. (2006). *L'età della televisione experience e teorie*. Roma: Editori Laterza.
- Burke, J., & Christensen, L. (2004). *Educational research: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson Publishing.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Burrell, J. (2010). Evaluating shared access: social equality and the circulation of mobile phones in rural Uganda. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 15(2), 230–250. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2010.01518.x>
- Bush, T. (2011). *Theories of educational leadership and management* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Bush, T., Bell, L., & Middlewod, D. (2010). *The principles of educational leadership and management*. London: Sage.
- Camburn, E., Rowan, B., & Taylor, J. (2003). Distributed leadership in schools: the case of elementary schools adopting comprehensive school reform models. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(4), 347–373.
- Chapman, C., & Fullan, M. (2007). Collaboration and partnership for equitable improvement: towards a networked learning system? *School Leadership & Management*, 27(3), 207–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430701379354>
- Ciaffa, J. A. (2008). Tradition and modernity in postcolonial African philosophy. *Humanitas*, 21(1), 121–145.
- Claxton, G. (2002). *Building learning power*. Bristol: TLO.
- Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: complementary research strategies*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Cohen, D. J., & Crabtree, B. F. (2008). Evaluative criteria for qualitative research in health care: controversies and recommendations. *The Annals of Family Medicine*, 6(4), 331–339. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.818>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge. (6th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Craft, A. (2000). *Teaching creativity: philosophy and practice*. London: Routledge.
- Craft, A. (2001). An analysis of research and literature on creativity in education. *Qualifications and Curriculum Authority*, 1–37.



- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. M. (2005). *Leadership for the common good: tackling public problems in a shared-power world* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundation of social research: meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc.
- Cuban, L. (2013). *Inside the blackbox of classroom practice: change without reform in American education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Daly, H. E., & Cobb, J. B. (1994). *For the common good: redirecting the economy toward community, the environment, and a sustainable future* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (1996). The right to learn and the advancement of teaching: research, policy, and practice for democratic education. *Educational Researcher*, 25(6), 5.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1176043>
- Day, C. (2011). The layering of leadership. In J. Robertson & H. Timperley (Eds.), *Leadership and Learning* (pp. 13–26). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Dei, G. J. S. (2004). *Schooling and education in Africa: the case of Ghana*. Trenton, N. J.: Africa World Press.
- Delors, J., Al Mufti, I., Amagi, A., Caneiro, R., Chung, F., Geremeck, B., ... Nanzhao, Z. (1996). *Learning: the treasure within -report* (The international commission on education for the twenty-first century) (pp. 1–46). Paris: UNESCO.
- Dempster, N., Konza, D., Robson, G., Gaffney, M., Lock, G., & McKennarley, K. (2012). *Principals as literacy leaders: confident, credible and connected*. Kingston, Australia: Australian Primary Principals Association.
- Denscombe, M. (2010). *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects* (4th ed.). Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects* (5th ed.). New York: Open University Press.

- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Desforges, C. (2000). Learning. In B. Moon, S. Brown, & C. Ben-Peretz (Eds.), *Routledge international companion to education* (pp. 65–82). London: Routledge.
- Deutschman, A. (2007). Change or die. *Fast Company*, 94, 1–7.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: an introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: Macmillan Company.
- Dey, I. (1995). Reducing fragmentation in qualitative research. In U. Keele (Ed.), *Computer-aided qualitative data analysis* (pp. 69–79). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Diener, C. L., & Dweck, C. S. (1980). An analysis of learned helplessness: II. The processing of success. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39(5), 940–952.  
<https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.39.5.940>
- Dilley, R. (1999). Introduction: the problem of context. In R. Dilley (Ed.), *The problem of context* (pp. 1–46). Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Donkor, A. K. (2010). Parental involvement in education in Ghana: the case of a private elementary school. *International Journal about Parents in Education*, 4(1), 23–38.
- Donkor, A. K. (2013). Basic school leaders in Ghana: how equipped are they? *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 18(2), 225–238.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2013.817610>
- Drever, E. (2003). *Using semi-structured interviews in small-scale research: a teacher's guide* (Revised). Glasgow: The SCRE Centre, University o Glasgow.
- DuFour, R., Eaker, R. E., DuFour, R., & Karhanek, G. (2010). *Raising the bar and closing the gap: whatever it takes*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
- Dweck, C. S., & Leggett, E. L. (2000). A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality. In E. T. Higgins & A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Key reading in social psychology. Motivational science: Social and personality perspectives* (pp. 394–415). New York, NY: Psychology Press. Retrieved from  
<http://psycnet.apa.org/record/2000-12688-022>
- Eacott, S., & Asuga, G. N. (2014). School leadership preparation and development in Africa: a critical insight. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 42(6), 919–934. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143214523013>
- Eells, R. J. (2011). *Meta-analysis of the relationship between collective teacher efficacy and student achievement* (Doctoral dissertation). Loyola University Chicago, Illinois. Retrieved from

- Elmore, R. F. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership*. Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute.
- Elmore, R. F. (2004). *School reform from the inside out: policy, practice and performance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Engestrom, Y. (1996). Development as breaking away and opening up: a challenge to Vygotsky and Piaget. *Swiss Journal of Psychology*, 55(2), 126–132.
- Enz, C. A. (1988). The role of value congruity in interorganizational power. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 33(2), 284–304.
- Essuman, A., & Akyeampong, K. (2011). Decentralisation policy and practice in Ghana: the promise and reality of community participation in education in rural communities. *Journal of Education Policy*, 26(4), 513–527.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2011.554999>
- Fay, B. (1987). *Critical social science: liberation and its limits*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Ferreira, F., Jolliffe, D. M., & Prydz, E. B. (2015). The international poverty line has just been raised to \$ 1.90 a day, but global poverty is basically unchanged. How is that even possible? [A blog hosted by the World Bank’s Chief Economist]. Retrieved 8 October 2016, from <http://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/international-poverty-line-has-just-been-raised-190-day-global-poverty-basically-unchanged-how-even>
- Finlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative Research*, 2(2), 209–230.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410200200205>
- Firestone, W. A., & Robinson, V. M. J. (2010). Research on educational leadership - approaches/promising directions. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGraw (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed., Vols 1–8, pp. 740–745). Amsterdam: Academic Press.
- Fitzgerald, T., & Gunter, H. (2008). Contesting the orthodoxy of teacher leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 11(4), 331–340.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603120802317883>
- Flick, U. (2015). *Introducing research methodology: a beginner’s guide to doing a research project* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219–245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- Fobih, D., Asare-Bediako, N., & Boachie-Danquah, Y. (1995). *The process of education policy formation in Africa: the case of Ghana*. Paris: DAE.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2000). The interview: from structured questions to negotiated text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. A. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 645–672). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Forman, M. L., Stosich, E. L., & Bocala, C. (2017). *The internal coherence framework: creating the conditions for continuous improvement in schools*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Frost, D. (2006). The concept of ‘agency’ in Leadership for Learning. *Leading & Managing*, 12(2), 19–28.
- Frost, D., & Swaffield, S. (2008). Researching LfL through an international collaborative project. In J. MacBeath & Y. C. Cheng (Eds.), *Leadership for Learning: international perspectives* (pp. 101–122). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Fullan, M. (2006). *Turnaround leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2010). *All systems go: the change imperative for whole school reform*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Fullan, M. (2015). *Freedom to change: four strategies to put your inner drive into overdrive*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Fullan, M. (2016). *The new meaning of educational change* (5th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Fullan, M., & Boyle, A. (2014). *Big-city school reforms: lessons from New York, Toronto and London*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1975). *TRUTH AND METHOD*. London: Sheed & Ward.
- Gardner, H. (2004). *Changing minds*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Garvin, D. A. (2003). Making the case: professional education for the world of practice. *Harvard Magazine*, 106(1), 56–107.
- Gerring, J. (2004). What is a case study and what is it good for? *American Political Science Review*, 98(2), 341–354.
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2003). *The Ghana child labour survey*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2013). *Millenium development goals in Ghana* (Population and housing census report) (pp. 1–79). Accra: Ghana Statistical Service. Retrieved from

- <http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/MDG%20report%20%2824-10-13%29.pdf>
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2014a). *Ghana living standards survey child labour report* (pp. 1–65). Accra, Ghana. Retrieved from [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/glss6/GLSS6\\_Child%20Labour%20Report.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/glss6/GLSS6_Child%20Labour%20Report.pdf)
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2014b). *Housing in Ghana*.pdf. Retrieved 24 March 2018, from <http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Mono/Housing%20in%20Ghana.pdf>
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2015a). *National employment report*. Retrieved 24 March 2018, from [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/IBES\\_Questionnaires/IBES%201%20reports/NATIONAL%20EMPLOYMENT%20REPORT\\_FINAL%20%2024-5-16.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/IBES_Questionnaires/IBES%201%20reports/NATIONAL%20EMPLOYMENT%20REPORT_FINAL%20%2024-5-16.pdf)
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2015b). *Poverty mapping report for Ghana*. Retrieved 24 March 2018, from <http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/publications/POVERTY%20MAP%20FOR%20GHANA-05102015.pdf>
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2016). *2015 Labour force report* (pp. 1–234). Retrieved from [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/publications/Labour\\_Force/LFS%20REPORT\\_fianl\\_21-3-17.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/publications/Labour_Force/LFS%20REPORT_fianl_21-3-17.pdf)
- GhanaWeb. (2018a). Ghanaian ‘blackboard ICT teacher’ gets standing ovation in Singapore. Retrieved 16 March 2018, from <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghanaian-blackboard-ICT-teacher-gets-standing-ovation-in-Singapore-634658>
- GhanaWeb. (2018b, April 6). UCC graduate kills himself after 3 years without a job. Retrieved 4 May 2018, from <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/UCC-graduate-kills-himself-after-3-years-without-a-job-640942>
- Glaser, B. G. (1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems*, 12(4), 436–445. <https://doi.org/10.2307/798843>
- Glaser, B. G., & Holton, J. (2004). Remodelling grounded theory. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 5). Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/viewArticle/607>
- Gordon, R. (2011). Leadership and power. In A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *The sage handbook of leadership* (pp. 195–202). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

- Gordon, R. D. (2002). Conceptualising leadership with respect to its historical-contextual antecedents to power. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 13(2), 151–167.
- Government of Ghana, National development planning commission. (2005). *Growth and poverty reduction strategy (GPRS II) (2006-2009)* (Government) (p. 61). Accra: National Development Planning Commission.
- Grenville-Cleave, B., & Boniwell, I. (2012). Surviving or thriving? Do teachers have lower perceived control and well-being than other professions? *Management in Education*, 26(1), 3–5. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020611429252>
- Griffith, K., & Kowalski, H. (2010). *Dictionary of education terms*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Grogan, M. (2013). *The Jossey-Bass reader on educational leadership* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gronn, P. (2003). *The new work of educational leaders: changing leadership practice in an era of school reform*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Gronn, P. (2010). Where to next for educational leadership? In T. Bush, L. Bell, & D. Middlewood (Eds.), *The principles of educational leadership and management* (pp. 70–85). London: Sage.
- Grootaert, C., Narayan, D., & Woolcock, M. (2004). *Working Paper No. 18: Measuring Social Capital*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). ethics, reflexivity, and ethically important moments in research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(2), 261–280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800403262360>
- Gwet, K. L. (2014). *Handbook of inter-rater reliability: the definitive guide to measuring the extent of agreement among raters: a handbook for researchers, practitioners, teachers and students* (4. ed). Gaithersburg, MD: Advanced Analytics, LLC.
- Gyekye, K. (1997). *Tradition and modernity: philosophical reflections on the African experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hallgren, K. A. (2012). Computing inter-rater reliability for observational data: an overview and tutorial. *Tutorials in Quantitative Methods for Psychology*, 8(1), 23.
- Hallinger, P. (2009). *Leadership for 21st century schools: from instructional leadership to leadership for learning*. Public lecture paper, Hong Kong Institute of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.ied.edu.hk/cplectures/eng/resources.php>

- Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for learning: lessons from 40 years of empirical research. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49(2), 125–142.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231111116699>
- Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (2010). Leadership for learning: does collaborative leadership make a difference in school improvement? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 38(6), 654–678. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143210379060>
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: principles in practice* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Hardy, C., & Clegg, S. R. (1996). Some dare call it power. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational studies* (pp. 622–641). London: Sage.
- Hargreaves, A. (2003). *Teaching in the knowledge society: education in the age of insecurity*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hargreaves, A., Boyle, A., & Harris, A. (2014). *Uplifting leadership: how organisations, teams, and communities raise performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Harlen, W. (2006). On the relationship between assessment for formative and summative purposes. In J. Gardener (Ed.), *Assessment and learning* (pp. 103–117). London: Sage.
- Harris, A. (2009). Distributed leadership: what we know. In A. Harris (Ed.), *Distributed leadership* (Vol. 7, pp. 11–21). Netherlands: Springer.
- Harris, A. (2010). Distributed leadership: current evidence and future directions. In T. Bush, L. Bell, & D. Middlewood (Eds.), *The principles of educational leadership and management* (pp. 55–69). London: Sage.
- Hartley, D. (1999). Marketing and the ‘re-enchantment’ of school management. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 20(3), 309–323.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01425699995281>
- Hartwell, A., Wils, A., & Zhao, Y. (2006). Reaching out-of-school children: sub-regional disparities. *Journal of Education for International Development*, 2(2), 1–23.
- Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: a synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London: Routledge.
- Hattie, L. (2015). *What works best in education: the politics of collaborative expertise*. London: Pearson Publishing.
- Holdbrook, M. S. (2012). Leadership for Learning in action. *LfL Ghana Newsletter*, 2(1), 2–3.

- Hopkins, D. (2001). *School improvement for real*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Hopkins, D., Harris, A., & Jackson, D. (1997). Understanding the school's capacity for development: growth states and strategies. *School Leadership & Management*, 17(3), 401–412. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632439769944>
- Hopkins, D., & Reynolds, D. (2001). The past, present and future of school improvement: towards the third age. *British Educational Research Journal*, 27(4), 459–475. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920120071461>
- Horsburgh, D. (2003). Evaluation of qualitative research. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 12(2), 307–312. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2702.2003.00683.x>
- Howie, P., & Bagnall, R. (2015). A critical comparison of transformation and deep approach theories of learning. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 34(3), 348–365. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2014.1000409>
- Hruby, G. G. (2001). Sociological, postmodern, and new realism perspectives in social constructionism: implications for literacy research. 36(1), 48–62. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36(1), 48–62. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.36.1.3>
- Hume, B. (1996). The common good and the Catholic Church's social teaching. *Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales*.
- Illeris, K. (2007). *How we learn: an introduction to learning and non-learning in school and beyond*. London: Routledge.
- Inikori, J. E. (2000). Africa and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. In T. Falola (Ed.), *African history before 1885* (Vol. 1, pp. 389–412). Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Institute for Statistical Social and Economic Research. (2013). *The state of the Ghanaian Economy in 2012* (Academic) (pp. 1–214). Accra: Institute for Statistical Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana, Legon. Retrieved from [http://www.sow.vu.nl/pdf/FPS/The\\_State\\_of\\_the\\_Ghanaian\\_Economy\\_in\\_2012\\_chapter\\_9.pdf](http://www.sow.vu.nl/pdf/FPS/The_State_of_the_Ghanaian_Economy_in_2012_chapter_9.pdf)
- Institute of Economic Affairs. (2018, February 13). Job creation key priority for youth - IEA survey. Retrieved 18 February 2018, from <https://www.nanansem.com/ghana/local-news/job-creation-key-priority-youth-iea-survey/>
- Jull, S., Swaffield, S., & MacBeath, J. (2012). LfL Ghana: Systemic Bottom-up Top-down Change. *Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge*, (13). Retrieved from [https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/lfl/about/inform/PDFs/InForm\\_13.pdf](https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/lfl/about/inform/PDFs/InForm_13.pdf)



- Jull, S., Swaffield, S., & MacBeath, J. (2014). Changing perceptions is one thing...: barriers to transforming leadership and learning in Ghanaian basic schools. *School Leadership & Management*, 34(1), 69–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2013.849679>
- Kamberelis, G., & Dimitradis, G. (2008). Focus groups: strategic articulations of pedagogy, politics, and inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed., pp. 375–402). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kane, E. (1990). *Doing your own research: how to do basic descriptive research in the social sciences and humanities*. New York: Marion Boyars Pub. Ltd.
- Kant, I. (1790). *Critique of Judgment*. (W. S. Pluhar, Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- King, K. (2007). Multilateral agencies in the construction of the global agenda on education. *Comparative Education*, 43(3), 377–391.
- Kleptsova, E. Y., & Balabanov, A. A. (2016). Development of humane interpersonal relationships. *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, 11(4), 2147–2157.
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Krueger, R. A. (1998). *Moderating focus groups*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- La Pastina, A. C., & Straubhaar, J. D. (2005). Multiple proximities between television genres and audiences: the schism between telenovelas' global distribution and local consumption. *International Communication Gazette*, 67(3), 271–288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0016549205052231>
- Landis, J. R., & Koch, G. G. (1977). The measurement of observer agreement for categorical data. *Biometrics*, 33(1), 159–174. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2529310>
- Law, E., Galton, M., & Wan, S. (2010). Distributed curriculum leadership in action: a Hong Kong case study. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 38(3), 286–303. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143209359714>
- Leggett, E. L. (1985). Children's entity and incremental theories of intelligence: relationships to achievement behavior. Presented at the Annual meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, Boston, MA.

- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (1999). The relative effects of principal and teacher sources of leadership on student engagement with school. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 35(Supplemental), 679–706.
- Leithwood, K., & Louis, K. S. (2012). *Linking leadership and student learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Leithwood, K., & Riehl, C. J. (2005). What do we already know about school leadership? In W. A. Firestone & C. J. Riehl (Eds.), *A new agenda: directions for research on educational leadership* (pp. 12–27). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Levin, B., & Fullan, M. (2008). Learning about System Renewal. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 36(2), 289–303.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143207087778>
- Levin, B., & Pekar, S. (2007). Building student voice for school improvement. In A. Cook-Sather & D. Thiessen (Eds.), *International handbook of student experience* (pp. 711–726). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Lewin, K. M., & Akyeampong, K. (2009). Education in sub-Saharan Africa: researching access, transitions and equity. *Comparative Education*, 45(2), 143–150.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060902920492>
- Liebling, M., & Prior, R. (2005). *The a-z of learning: tips and techniques for teachers*. Abington: Routledge Falmer.
- Locke, L., Spirduso, W. W., & Silverman, S. J. (1999). *Proposals that work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- MacBeath, J. (2009). Shared accountability: principle 5. In J. MacBeath & N. Dempster (Eds.), *Connecting leadership and learning: principles for practice* (pp. 137–156). Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge.
- MacBeath, J. (2010a). Leadership for Learning. In G. McCulloch & D. Crook (Eds.), *The Routledge international encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed., Vol. 4, pp. 817–823). London: Routledge.
- MacBeath, J. (2010b). Leadership for learning: concepts, principles and practice. *Leadership for Learning Cambridge Network*, 2, 1–9.
- MacBeath, J., & Dempster, N. (2009). Leadership and Learning: making the connections. In J. MacBeath & N. Dempster (Eds.), *Connecting leadership and learning: principles for practice* (pp. 1–3). Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge.

- MacBeath, J., Dempster, N., Frost, D., Johnson, G., & Swaffield, S. (2018). *Strengthening the connections between leadership and learning: challenges to policy, school and classroom practice*. New York: Routledge.
- MacBeath, J., Frost, D., Swaffield, S., & Waterhouse, J. (2006). *Making the connections: the story of a seven country odyssey in search of a practical theory*. Cambridge: Faculty of Education.
- MacBeath, J., Pedder, D., & Swaffield, S. (2007). Schools learning how to learn. In M. James, R. McCormick, P. Black, P. Carmichael, M.-J. Drummond, J. MacBeath, ... D. Willian (Eds.), *Improving learning how to learn: classrooms, schools, networks* (pp. 64–88). Abington, Oxon: Routledge.
- MacBeath, J., Swaffield, S., Oduro, G., & Bosu, R. (2010). Developing leadership for learning in Ghana: opportunities and challenges. In *23rd annual congress for school effectiveness and improvement, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*. Retrieved from [http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/lfl/projects/ghana/resources/macbeath\\_swaffield\\_et\\_al\\_icsei2010.pdf](http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/lfl/projects/ghana/resources/macbeath_swaffield_et_al_icsei2010.pdf)
- Macpherson, I., Brooker, R., & Ainsworth, P. (2000). Case study in the contemporary world of research: using notions of purpose, place, process and product to develop some principles for practice. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(1), 49–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/136455700294923>
- Malakolunthu, S., MacBeath, J., & Swaffield, S. (2014). Improving the quality of teaching and learning through leadership for learning: changing scenarios in basic schools of Ghana. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 42(5), 701–717. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143213510510>
- Maliki, S. (2011). Monetary and non-monetary deprivation in Algeria: a determinant method by the ROC curve. In *Measuring national income, wealth, poverty and inequality in African countries*. Cape Town.
- Mante, A. F. (2016). *Content localisation and viewer needs certification: a study of 'Kumkum Bhagya' viewers* (MA thesis). University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana. Retrieved from University of Ghana <http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh>
- Marris, P. (1975). *Loss and change*. New York, NY: Anchor Press.
- Marwick, A. (2001). *The new nature of history: knowledge, evidence, language*. Basingstoke: Pelgrave.

- M'baye, B. (2006). The economic, political, and social Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa. *The European Legacy*, 11(6), 607–622.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10848770600918091>
- McCormick, R., Fox, A., & Carmichael, P. (2007). Learning through networking. In M. James, R. McCormick, P. Black, P. Carmichael, M.-J. Drummond, A. Fox, ... D. Willian (Eds.), *Improving learning how to learn: classrooms, schools and networks* (pp. 89–113). Abington, Oxon: Routledge.
- McLaughlin, C., Swartz, S., Cobbett, M., & Kiragu, S. (2014). Inviting Backchat: how schools and communities in Ghana, Swaziland and Kenya support children to contextualise knowledge and create agency through sexuality education. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 41, 208–216.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.06.006>
- Melé, D. (2005). Exploring the principle of subsidiarity in organisational forms. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 60(3), 293–305.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, T. W., & Miller, J. M. (2001). Educational leadership in the new millennium: a vision for 2020. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 4(2), 181–189.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603120120806>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Sports. (2008). *Education sector performance report* (Government). Accra: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations. (2014). National employment policy. Government of Ghana. Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-addis\\_ababa/---ilo-abuja/documents/publication/wcms\\_373458.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-addis_ababa/---ilo-abuja/documents/publication/wcms_373458.pdf)
- Mitchell, C., & Sackney, L. (2011). *Profound improvement: building capacity for a learning community*. Oxford: Francis & Tayler.
- Morgan, D. L. (1988). *Focus groups on qualitative research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Morieux, Y., & Tollman, P. (2014). *Six simple rules: how to manage complexity without getting complicated*. Boston, MA: Harvard university Review Press.
- Negus, A., & Pickering, M. (2004). *Creativity, communication and cultural value*. London: Thousand Oaks, CA:
- Newman, J. H. (1846). *An essay on the development of christian doctrine* (2nd ed.). London: James Toovey.

- Nisbet, J., & Watt, J. (1984). Case study. In J. Bell, T. Bush, A. Fox, J. Goodey, & S. Goulding (Eds.), *Conducting small-scale investigations in educational management* (pp. 79–92). London: Harper and Row.
- Nishimura, M., Ogawa, K., Sifuna, D. N., Chimombo, J., Kunje, D., Byamugisha, A., ... Ampiah, J. G. (2009). A comparative analysis of universal primary education policy in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education*, 12(1), 143–158.
- N'tchougan-Sonou, C. H. (2000). *Values learned through formal education: a comparative study of Anglophone and Francophone Ewes in Ghana and Togo* (Doctoral Thesis). University of Oxford, Oxford.
- Nunn, N. (2008). The long-term effects of Africa's slave trades. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 123(1), 139–176. <https://doi.org/10.1162/qjec.2008.123.1.139>
- Nunn, N., & Wantchekon, L. (2011). The slave trade and the origins of mistrust in Africa. *American Economic Review*, 101(7), 3221–3252. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.101.7.3221>
- O'Connell, D., & Kowall, S. (1995). Basic principles of transcription. In J. A. Smith, R. Harre, & L. V. Langenhove (Eds.), *Rethinking methods in Psychology* (pp. 93–104). London: Sage.
- Oduro, G. (2018). The gold between my thighs: examination of child prostitution in a Ghanaian metropolis. Retrieved 28 April 2018, from <https://www.ucc.edu.gh/news/researcher-calls-multi-sectoral-approach-address-child-prostitution>
- Oduro, G. K. T. (2009). The missing ingredient: headteacher leadership development in sub-Saharan Africa. In *Looking ahead at 50*. Oxford. Retrieved from <http://www.cedol.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/142-144-2009.pdf>
- Oduro, G. K. T. (2018). Cape Vars Pro-VC proposes restrictions on access to WhatsApp. Retrieved 17 March 2018, from <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Cape-Vars-Pro-VC-proposes-restrictions-on-access-to-WhatsApp-615362>
- Oduro, G. K. T., & Macbeath, J. (2003). Traditions and tensions in leadership: the Ghanaian experience. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 441–455. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764032000122050>
- Oliver, P. (2003). *The student's guide to research ethics*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- O'Neill, O. (2002). *A question of trust: the BBC Reith lectures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oppenheim, A. N. (1992). *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement* (New edition). London: Continuum.
- Osei, G. M. (2006). Teachers in Ghana: issues of training, remuneration and effectiveness. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 26(1), 38–51.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2005.07.015>
- Owusu, G. (2010). Social effects of poor sanitation and waste management on poor urban communities: a neighborhood-specific study of Sabon Zongo, Accra. *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 3(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17549175.2010.502001>
- Palmer, R. (2010). Ghana. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGraw (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed., Vol. 5, pp. 590–598). Amsterdam: Academic Press.
- Pansiri, N. O. (2011). Performativity in school management and leadership in Botswana. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 39(6), 751–766.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143211416386>
- Perakyla, A. (2008). Analyzing talk and text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed., pp. 351–374). London: Sage Publications.
- Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R. (2000). *The knowing-doing gap*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Piot, C. (1996). Of slaves and the gift: Kabre sale of kin during the era of the slave trade. *Journal of African History*, 37(1), 31–49.
- Piper, H., & Simons, H. (2005). Ethical responsibility in social research. In B. Somekh & C. Lewin (Eds.), *Research methods in the social sciences* (pp. 56–64). London: SAGE Publications.
- Plowman, D., & Duchon, D. (2008). Dispelling the myths about leadership: from cybernetics to emergence. In M. Uhl-Bien & R. Marion (Eds.), *Complexity leadership, part 1: conceptual foundations* (pp. 129–154). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Polit, F., Beck, C., & Hungler, B. (2001). *Nursing research, methods, appraisal and utilization* (5th ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

- Popp, J. A. (2015). John Dewey's theory of growth and the ontological view of society. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 34(1), 45–62. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-014-9425-4>
- Porter, G., Hampshire, K., Abane, A., Munthali, A., Robson, E., Mashiri, M., & Tanle, A. (2012). Youth, mobility and mobile phones in Africa: findings from a three-country study. *Information Technology for Development*, 18(2), 145–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02681102.2011.643210>
- Qian, H., & Walker, A. (2011). Leadership for learning in China: The political and policy context. In T. Townsend & J. MacBeath (Eds.), *International handbook of leadership for learning* (Vol. 25, pp. 209–224). London: Springer.
- Quansah, R. (2000). *Report on USAID LLS project in Ghana*. Accra,: CRDD/MOE.
- Raelin, J. A. (2003). *Creating leaderful organizations: how to bring out leadership in everyone*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Reeves, D. (2006). *The learning leader*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Reimers, F., & Chung, C. K. (2016). Introduction: a comparative study of the purposes of education in the twenty-first century. In F. Reimers & C. K. Chung (Eds.), *Teaching and learning for the twenty-first century; educational goals, policies, and curricular from six nations* (pp. 1–24). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rhodes, C., & Brundrett, M. (2010). Leadership for learning. In T. Bush, L. Bell, & D. Middlewood (Eds.), *The principles of educational leadership & management* (2nd ed., pp. 153–175). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Ritchie, J., & Spencer, L. (1994). Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research. In A. Bryman & R. G. Burgess (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data* (pp. 173–194). London: Routledge.
- Robinson, V. M. J. (2001). Embedding leadership in task performance. In K. Wong & C. Evers (Eds.), *Leadership for quality schooling: international perspectives* (pp. 90–102). London: Falmer Press.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Robson, C. (2011). *Real world research* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research* (4th ed.). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Rodd, J. (2013). *Leadership in early childhood: the pathway to professionalism* (4th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- Rönnbäck, K. (2015). The transatlantic slave trade and social stratification on the Gold Coast. *Economic History of Developing Regions*, 30(2), 157–181.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20780389.2015.1075384>
- Sackney, L., & Mitchell, C. (2009). Leadership for Learning: a Canadian perspective. In J. MacBeath & Y. C. Cheng (Eds.), *Leadership for learning: International perspectives* (pp. 123–136). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Sayed, Y., Akyeampong, K., & Ampiah, J. G. (2000). Partnership and participation in whole school development in Ghana. *Education through Partnership*, 4(2), 40–45.
- Segura, C. (2009). *Lost in translation: why the structures of formal schooling are not translating in rural Ghana* (International Development Studies). University of Toronto, Toronto. Retrieved from  
<https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/17583>
- Sergiovanni, T. (2001). *Leadership: what's in it for school?* London: Falmer Press.
- Sheykhjan, T. M. (2015). Quality education for social development and human well-being. In *Proceeding of the UGC sponsored two-day national seminar* (pp. 123–128). Pala, Kerala: St. Thomas College of Teacher Education.
- Shields, C. M. (2010). Leadership: transformative. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd ed., Vol. 5, pp. 26–33). Amsterdam: Academic Press.
- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data: a guide to the principles of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Singh, R. (2009). *Mobile phones for development and profit: a win-win scenario*. London: Odi Opinion.
- Slater, D., & Kwami, J. (2005). Embeddedness and escape: internet and mobile use as poverty reduction strategies in Ghana. Information Society Research Group. Retrieved from  
<http://www.urbanlab.org/articles/Slater%20and%20Kwami%202005%20Internet%20and%20mobile%20phones%20in%20Ghana.pdf>
- Smith, D. J. (2006). Cell phones, social inequality, and contemporary culture in Nigeria. *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines*, 40(3), 496–523. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2006.10751403>
- Songsore, J., & McGranahan, G. (1993). Environment, wealth and health: towards an analysis of intra-urban differentials within the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area,



- Ghana. *Environment and Urbanization*, 5(2), 10–34.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/095624789300500203>
- Southworth, G. (2011). Connecting leadership and learning. In J. Robertson & H. Timperley (Eds.), *Leadership and learning* (pp. 71–85). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Spillane, J. P. (2006). *Distributed leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Stein, S. J. (2000). Opportunity to learn as a policy outcome measure. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 26(4), 298–314.
- Stern, B. B., Russell, C. A., & Russell, D. W. (2005). Vulnerable women on screen and at home: soap opera consumption. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 25(2), 222–225.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146705280717>
- Stewart, D. W., & Shamdasani, P. N. (1998). Focus group research: exploration and discovery. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 505–526). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stogdill, R. M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership: a survey of the literature*. New York: Free Press.
- Stoll, L. (2009). Capacity building for school improvement or creating capacity for learning? A changing landscape. *Journal of Educational Change*, 10(2–3), 115–127.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-009-9104-3>
- Straubhaar, J. D. (1998). Cultural capital, language and cultural proximity in the globalization of television. In *48th International Communications Association*. Jerusalem.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research techniques for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Strauss, A. L. (1990). Systematic coding in qualitative research. *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology/Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique*, 27(1), 52–62.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/075910639002700103>
- Swaffield, S. (2007). Light touch critical friendship. *Improving Schools*, 10(3), 205–219.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480207077845>
- Swaffield, S. (2008). Critical friendship, dialogue and learning, in the context of leadership for learning. *School Leadership & Management*, 28(4), 323–336.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430802292191>

- Swaffield, S. (2011). Getting to the heart of authentic assessment for learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 18(4), 433–449.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2011.582838>
- Swaffield, S., Jull, S., & Ampah-Mensah, A. (2013). Using mobile phone texting to support the capacity of school leaders in Ghana to practise Leadership for Learning. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 103, 1295–1302.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.459>
- Swaffield, S., & MacBeath, J. (2009). Leadership for learning. In J. MacBeath & N. Dempster (Eds.), *Connecting leadership and learning: principles for practice* (pp. 32–52). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Swaffield, S., & MacBeath, J. (2010). Leading professional development to build capacity of headteachers in Ghana. Presented at the camERA, Cambridge: Faculty of Education.
- Swain, J. (2006). An ethnographic approach to researching children in junior school. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9(3), 199–213.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570600761346>
- Taber, K. S. (2013). Who counts as an author when reporting educational research? *Chemistry Education and Practice*, 14(1), 5–8. <https://doi.org/10.1039/c2rp90014a>
- Tan, O.-S., & Low, E.-L. (2016). Singapore’s systematic approach to teaching and learning twenty-first century competencies. In F. Reimers & C. K. Chung (Eds.), *Teaching and learning for the twenty-first century: educational goals, policies and curricula from six nations* (pp. 25–68). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Tangonyire, R., & Achal, L. K. (2012). *Economic behaviour as if others too had interests*. Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa Research & Publishing CIG.
- Thomson, P., & Hall, C. (2006, January). *Youth and media*. Seminar presentation, Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media.
- Tobin, F. (2002). *Report to Frank Tobin public relations from Bell-Phillip television productions*. Los Angeles, CA.
- Tolchard, B., Glozah, F., & Pevalin, D. (2014). Attitudes to gambling in Ghanaian adolescents. *Journal of Addiction Research & Therapy*, 5(3), 1–34.  
<https://doi.org/10.4172/2155-6105.S1.015>
- Touré, K. (2007). Telenovelas reception by women in Bouaké (Côte D’Ivoire) and Bamako (Mali). *Visual Anthropology*, 20(1), 41–56.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08949460600961596>

- Townsend, T. (2012). From leadership by instructions to leadership for learning. In *Innovations and trends in education* (Vol. 56, pp. 1–37). Cape Coast: ICET. Retrieved from [http://icet4u.org/where\\_weve\\_been.php](http://icet4u.org/where_weve_been.php)
- Townsend, T., & MacBeath, J. (2011). *International handbook of leadership for learning* (Vol. 25). London: Springer.
- Tufte, T. (2005). Entertainment-education in development communication. *Change, Rethinking Communication for Development*, 159–174.
- Uhl-Bien, M., & Marion, R. (2011). The complexity leadership theory. In A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *The sage handbook of leadership* (pp. 468–482). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- UNESCO. (1974). *Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms* ( Vol. 1-8). Presented at the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris. Retrieved from [http://www.unesco.org/education/nfsunesco/pdf/Peace\\_e.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/education/nfsunesco/pdf/Peace_e.pdf)
- UNESCO. (2000). *World education forum: the Dakar framework for action* (No. ED-2000/WS/27) (pp. 1–78). Paris. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf>
- UNESCO. (2017). *Accountability in education: meeting our commitments* (Global education monitoring) (pp. 1–486). Paris: UNESCO Press. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002593/259338e.pdf>
- Verschuren, P. (2003). Case study as a research strategy: some ambiguities and opportunities. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 6(2), 121–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570110106154>
- Versi, A. (2010). Making the connections. *Msafiri*, 88–96.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1991). Imagination and creativity in the adolescent. *Soviet Psychology*, 29(1), 73–88. <https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405290173>
- Walford, G. (2001). *Doing qualitative educational research: a personal guide to the research process*. London: Continuum.
- Waterhouse, J., & Dempster, N. (2009). Seven countries, eight sites, 24 schools. In J. MacBeath & N. Dempster (Eds.), *Connecting leadership and learning: principles for practice* (pp. 53–63). London: Routledge.
- Watkins, C. (2005). *Classrooms as learning communities: What's in it for schools?* London: Routledge.

- Willis, P. (1990). *Common culture*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1953). *Philosophical investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- World Bank Group. (2017). *Governance and the law* (World Development Report). Washington, D.C: The World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25880/210950mm.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y>
- World Bank Group. (2018a). Accountability in governance. Retrieved 14 March 2018, from <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/PUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/AccountabilityGovernance.pdf>
- World Bank Group. (2018b). *Learning to realise education's promise* (World Development Report) (pp. 1–215). Washington, D.C: World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/28340/211096ov.pdf>
- Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: when students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), 302–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805>
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: design and methods* (4th ed.). London: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: design and methods* (5th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Ylimaki, R. M., Jacobson, S. L., & Drysdale, L. (2007). Making a difference in challenging, high-poverty schools: successful principals in the USA, England, and Australia. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 18(4), 361–381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450701712486>
- Yussif, N. (2012). Practicing Leadership for Learning at Kassmiya E/A primary school. *LfL Ghana Newsletter*, 2(1), 1–3.
- Zame, M. Y., Hope, W. C., & Respress, T. (2008). Educational reform in Ghana: the leadership challenge. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 22(2), 115–128. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540810853521>

## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Approval letter for trialling

# GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

In case of reply the  
Number and date of this  
Letter should be quoted  
My Ref: GES/AOB 99/ VOL. V/2  
Your Ref:



*Republic of Ghana*

DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE  
ASIKUMA-ODOBEN-BRAKWA  
P. O. BOX 29  
BREMEN ASIKUMA  
26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2016

THE HEADTEACHER **CONCERNED,**  
ASIKUMA **[REDACTED]**  
BREMEN ASIKUMA

**your school**

#### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY IN [REDACTED]

The bearer of this letter, Raymond Chegedua Tangonyire has sought for permission to carry out research activity in your school in relation to Leadership for Learning (Lfl) Principles.

The Directorate would be much grateful if you give him the maximum co – operation to achieve the purpose.

Counting on your usual co – operation.

ISAAC GODWIN KWESI ACQUAAH – ARHIN  
DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
ASIKUMA – ODOBEN - BRAKWA

Cc:  
RAYMOND CHEGEDUA TANGONYIRE

DR. ROSEMARY BONSU

PROFESSOR GEORGE ODURO

## Appendix 2. Approval letter for main research

# GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

*In case of reply the  
number and date of this  
letter should be quoted*



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

METROPOLITAN EDUCATION DIRECTORATE  
P. O. BOX 161  
CAPE COAST

Tel. 0243865901/0243852197  
Email: [capecoastmeo@yahoo.com](mailto:capecoastmeo@yahoo.com)  
My Ref. No GES/MD/EP1/VOL.4/072  
Your Ref. No.

20<sup>th</sup> July 2016

THE HEADTEACHERS CONCERNED  
CAPE COAST METROPOLIS

### RE-PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN CAPE COAST


This is inform you that the Metropolitan Directorate of Education has granted permission to

Mr Raymond ChegeduaTangonyire, a Ghanaian doctoral research student at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education to conduct a research into the processes of incorporating the LfL principles into basic schools in Ghana.

The study is expected to yield information that will be beneficial for better implementation and sustainability of the LfL, Ghana programme. The research will inform and stimulate dialogue of the subject matter.

You should however ensure that the study will not interfere with normal teaching and learning activities. Please, accord him the necessary assistance to ensure a successful exercise.

Thank you.

  
STEPHEN RICHARD AMOAH  
METRO DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
CAPE COAST.

cc

✓ Raymond ChegeduaTangonyire  
Faculty of Education  
University of Cambridge,  
UK

### Appendix 3. Sample of informed consent form



# UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## Faculty of Education

Thank you for your interest to participate in this research project. The study is being conducted by Raymond Chegedua Tangonyire, a doctoral research student at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom under the supervision of Dr Sue Swaffield. Before you agree to participate, please read this information carefully.

Over the years Ghanaians and the governments of every style have increasingly acknowledged the crucial role of quality education in achieving Ghana's human and national development goals. Key to quality education are quality leadership and learning. This research explores the ways headteachers, teachers, and pupils understand learning, leadership, dialogue and accountability, how they practise them and the factors that promote or inhibit their practice. It is hoped that through conversations with the headteachers, teachers and pupils on the themes above, both the participants and I will understand in a more beneficial way the above concepts and how they are practised. This can promote mutual learning and the findings of the research have the potential to improve leadership, teaching and learning as well as offer insights that can be beneficial to education policymakers. There are no right or wrong answers. The conversations will take the form of interviews and focus group discussions, which will be audio-taped and transcribed.

However, be rest assured that all responses provided will be used solely for academic purposes. All the files containing the responses are password protected to ensure confidentiality, and the tapes will be deleted from the system as soon as they are used for the intended purpose. Participants will also be given the opportunity to authenticate their opinions before the research findings will be analysed. Each interview session will be one-to-one and will last for about 40 minutes to an hour. There will also be focus group discussions, one for teachers and another for pupils. These will last for one and a half hours. There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort in participating in the interviews or the focus group discussions. Your anonymity as a respondent will be ensured – no form of identification is attached to the answers you provide because pseudonyms will be used for each participant. You are therefore entreated to respond as openly and objectively as possible. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may decline participation or may discontinue participation at any time.

If you have any questions, you may contact Raymond C. Tangonyire at [rct46@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rct46@cam.ac.uk). This project has been reviewed and approved by the Higher Degrees Office of the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge.

Please, find attached, the consent form on the next page.





# UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## Faculty of Education

### **Informed Consent Form**

**Title of Project:** Exploring the Incorporation of the Leadership for Learning (LfL) Principles in Ghana: The Case of Two LfL Basic Schools in the Central Region

**Name of Researcher:** Raymond Chegedua Tangonyire

1. I have read and understood the attached information sheet giving details of the project.
2. I have had the opportunity to ask the researcher any questions that I had about the project and my involvement in it, and understand my role in the project.
3. My decision to consent is entirely voluntary and I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
4. I understand that data gathered in this project may form the basis of a report or other form of publication or presentation.
5. I understand that my name will not be used in any report, publication or presentation, and that every effort will be made to protect my confidentiality.

Participant/guardian's signature:

Date:

Participant/guardian's name (in CAPITALS)

Researcher's signature:

Date:

Head of Faculty: Professor Geoff Hayward Secretary to the Faculty: Kate Allen  
Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, 184 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 8PQ, UK  
Tel: +44 (0) 767600 Fax: +44 (0) 767602 Email: [reception@educ.cam.ac.uk](mailto:reception@educ.cam.ac.uk) [www.educ.cam.ac.uk](http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk)



#### Appendix 4. Essay on road accidents by pupil BS2

### ROAD ACCIDENT / CAUSES & SOLUTION

Recently accident on our road have been claiming many lives. This has become a very big problem for the nations as the citizens continue to perish. I want to talk about the causes of this accident and suggest how they can be prevented.

In our country, road accident are caused mainly by drivers. The nature of our road and bad conditions of vehicles are contributory factors that bring road accident. There is a law in our country that states that if you drink don't drive and if you don't drink. These laws are important to other drivers but others do not take it serious. This ends up in a result of accident. Some of the drivers do not know the meaning of the various road signs. They speed when they are not supposed to do so. They overtake at the place where they are not supposed to do so. Others also park their vehicles at the road side without any parking signs or <sup>any</sup> warning triangular sign to indicate that there is a parking vehicle.

ahead. Some of the drivers lack knowledge and some also ply the roads, especially in the night, run into the parked vehicles.

There is also another cause of road accident, it is the bad nature of the road in the country. Some of the roads have potholes, so when the drivers decide to dodge them accident may occur. Some of the potholes are very deep. Sometimes when rains fall on it, it covers the potholes, so when the drivers are not used to the road, accident occurs.

Finally, many vehicles in the country are not roadworthy. Some of the vehicles in this country have been overused, this is a result in a worn out part. Because of money or help some use such "sick cars" that result into accident. I suggest the current rate of road accident will be drastically minimized or prevented. I know that if we prevent the recent spate of the road accident, drivers must also obey the laws of their work. The drivers who disobey the law is to be punished severely to serve as a lesson to other drivers. I think drivers should be educated to know the meaning or the uses of the various road signs.



Again, I want to tell drivers that they should not park their vehicle at certain areas. If your vehicle has a problem or a fault at the roadside they should be a parking sign to inform other drivers to be carefully at that area. I think the maintenance of the road should be the priority of the government. Lastly police officers should check to see if all vehicles on the road is in good condition. They must also check the light, tyres and etc. We must check vehicles light so that in the evening the drivers that are driving will be able to see, so that they don't run into some of the parked vehicles, to cause accident. The tyres of a vehicle must also be checked, because, if the driver is on full speed and the tyres lose it will cause accident. We must also make sure that vehicles that are not road worthy should not be made to ply the roads. I believe that if all measures I have mentioned are considered ~~at~~ ahead to, the current rate of road accident will be drastically minimized.

### Appendix 5. Mapping the research questions to the research participants

Research question	Targeted respondents						
	Headteachers	Teachers	Pupils	Parents	PTA chair	SMC chair	CS
<b>RQ1.</b> What do headteachers, teachers and pupils in LfL schools in Ghana understand by the LfL principles?	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>RQ2.</b> How have headteachers, teachers and pupils put the LfL principles into practice?	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>RQ3.</b> How have personal, socio-cultural, political and economic factors promoted the incorporation of these principles in the LfL schools?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>RQ4.</b> How have these factors inhibited the incorporation of the principles?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

NB: Yes = Applicable, and NA = Not applicable

## Appendix 6. Mapping research instruments to the research questions

Research questions (RQs)	Research instruments (RI)			
	Interviews	Observations	Focus group discussions	Documentary analysis
<b>RQ1.</b> What do headteachers, teachers and pupils in LfL schools in Ghana understand by the LfL principles?	✓ Main instrument	✓ Supporting instrument	✓ Main instrument	✓ Supporting instrument
<b>RQ2.</b> How have headteachers, teachers and pupils put the LfL principles into practice?	✓ Main	✓ Main	✓ Supporting	✓ Main
<b>RQ3.</b> How have personal, socio-cultural, political and economic factors promoted the incorporation of these principles in the LfL schools?	✓ Main	✓ Main	✓ Main	✓ Supporting Eg: using 1 exercise bk for every subject!
<b>RQ4.</b> How have these factors inhibited the incorporation of the principles?	✓ Main	✓ Main	✓ Main	✓ Supporting Eg: 3 subjects in 1 exer book!

✓ = Applicable (as main or supporting instrument)

### Appendix 7. Mapping research instruments to the research participants

Instruments	Targeted participants						
	Headteacher	Teachers	Pupils	Parents	PTA chair	SMC chair	Circuit supervisor
One-on-one interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus group discussions	NA	✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	NA
Observations	✓	✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	NA
Document analysis	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

✓ = Applicable and NA = Not applicable

## Appendix 8. The one-on-one interview protocols

Q1. What do headteachers, teachers and pupils understand by the LfL principles in schools in Ghana?

Guiding questions			
Theme	Headteacher	Teachers	Pupils
<b><u>Learning</u></b>	<b>Understanding of the concept of learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The primary focus of this school?</li> <li>➤ Who is involved in learning?</li> <li>➤ Who makes this school conducive for learning?</li> <li>➤ Any relationship between learning and leadership?</li> </ul>	<b>Understanding of the concept of learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The primary focus of this school?</li> <li>➤ Who is involved in learning?</li> <li>➤ Who makes this school conducive for learning?</li> <li>➤ Any relationship between learning and leadership?</li> </ul>	<b>Their understanding of learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why you go to school?</li> <li>➤ You learn from your teachers and peers?</li> <li>➤ Does anyone make the school a good place for learning?</li> </ul>
<b><u>Leadership</u></b>	<b>Understanding of the concept of leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Possession of leadership in the school</li> <li>➤ Location of leadership</li> <li>➤ Access to leadership</li> </ul>	<b>Understanding of the concept of leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Possession of leadership in the school</li> <li>➤ Location of leadership</li> <li>➤ Access to leadership</li> <li>➤ Experience of leadership</li> </ul>	<b>Understanding of the concept of leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Possession of leadership in the school</li> <li>➤ Location of leadership</li> <li>➤ Access to leadership</li> <li>➤ Experience of leadership</li> </ul>
<b><u>Dialogue</u></b>	<b>Sharing ideas on dialogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional dialogue?</li> <li>➤ Dialogue with students?</li> <li>➤ Supports leadership and learning?</li> </ul>	<b>Sharing ideas on dialogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional dialogue?</li> <li>➤ Classroom dialogue?</li> <li>➤ Supports leadership and learning?</li> </ul>	<b>Sharing ideas on dialogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pupil-pupil dialogue?</li> <li>➤ Pupil-staff/headteacher?</li> <li>➤ Supports leadership and learning?</li> </ul>

<b><u>Accountability</u></b>	<b>Understanding of accountability</b>	<b>Understanding of accountability</b>	<b>Understanding of accountability</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Accountable? To who? Why?</li> <li>➤ Who participates in it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Accountable? To who? Why?</li> <li>➤ Who participates in it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Accountable? To who? Why?</li> <li>➤ Who participates in it?</li> </ul>

Q2. How have headteachers, teachers, and pupils put the LfL principles into practice?

<b>One-on-one interview questions</b>			
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Headteachers</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Pupils</b>
<b><u>Learning</u></b>	<b>Practising learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing activities involved?</li> <li>➤ Most effective and ineffective activity</li> <li>➤ Mutual influencing of learning? How? Where?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing activities involved?</li> <li>➤ Most effective and ineffective activity</li> <li>➤ Mutual influencing of learning? How? Where?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing activities involved?</li> <li>➤ Most effective and ineffective activity</li> <li>➤ Mutual influencing of learning? How?</li> </ul>
<b><u>Leadership</u></b>	<b>Practising leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing activities involved?</li> <li>➤ Who is involved? How? Why?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing activities involved?</li> <li>➤ Who is involved? How? Where? Why?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing the way people are led in the school.</li> <li>➤ Who is involved? How? Where? Why?</li> </ul>
<b><u>Dialogue</u></b>	<b>Practising dialogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Culture of inquiry into knowledge, attitudes? How?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising dialogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Culture of inquiry into knowledge, attitudes? How?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising dialogue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Opportunity to ask questions?</li> </ul>



	➤ Culture of listening, reflection and critique?	➤ Culture of listening, reflection and critique?	➤ Encouraged to be reflective, critical, and creative?
<b><u>Accountability</u></b>	<b>Practising accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing how accountability is practised? Personal, classroom, school levels?</li> <li>➤ Others involved? Who? How? Why?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing how accountability is practised? Personal, classroom, and school levels?</li> <li>➤ Others involved? Who? How? Why?</li> </ul>	<b>Practising accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Describing how you practise accountability at personal, classroom and school levels?</li> <li>➤ Others involved? Who? How? Why?</li> </ul>

Q3 & 4. How have personal, socio-cultural, political and economic factors promoted or inhibited the incorporation of the LfL principles in the LfL schools?

Guiding questions	
Participants	Motivators/ inhibitors of LfL incorporation
Headteachers	<b>Personal experiences/convictions?</b> How? <b>Relationship</b> with pupils, teachers, parents, PTA, SMC, CS, and community? How? <b>Family, economic, cultural and political realities?</b> How?
Teachers	<b>Personal experiences/convictions?</b> How? <b>Relationship</b> with pupils, teachers, headteacher, parents, PTA, SMC, CS, and community? How? <b>Family, economic, cultural and political realities?</b> How?
Pupils	<b>Personal experiences/convictions?</b> How?

	<p><b>Relationship</b> with peers, teachers, and parents? How?</p> <p><b>Family, economic, cultural and political realities?</b> How?</p>
Parents	<p><b>Experience/observation of improvement</b> in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ your child/children's motivation, thinking skills, self-awareness, accountability?</li> <li>Contrary experience to the above?</li> <li>➤ the learning, leadership, teaching, organisation, and interrelationships in the school?</li> </ul> <p><b>Any factors responsible?</b> E.g. family, cultural, economic, political or relational?</p>
PTA Chair	<p><b>Experience/observation of improvement</b> in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ school's culture of learning, leading, teaching, dialogue, organisation and interrelationships?</li> <li>➤ Could you share these improvements?</li> </ul> <p><b>Any factors responsible?</b> E.g. family, cultural, economic, political or relational?</p>
SMC Chair	<p><b>Experience/observation of improvement</b> in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ school's culture of learning, leading, teaching, dialogue, organisation and interrelationships?</li> <li>➤ Could you share these improvements?</li> </ul> <p><b>Any factors responsible?</b> E.g. family, cultural, economic, political or relational</p>
CS	<p><b>Experience/observation of improvement</b> in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ school's culture of learning, leading, teaching, dialogue, organisation and interrelationships?</li> <li>➤ Could you share these improvements?</li> </ul> <p><b>Any factors responsible?</b> E.g. family, cultural, economic, political or relational. The headteacher and teachers' perception of you and your perception of them; as collaborators or a police and the policed?</p>

## Appendix 9. Focus group discussions protocol

Focus group discussions		
Participants	Themes for discussion	My comments
Students' focus discussions	<p>Conceptualisation of leadership, learning, dialogue, accountability, and emerging themes including stakeholder agency, relationship between physical facilities, interpersonal relationships and learning, role of modern technology.</p> <p>Practising leadership, learning, etc</p> <p>Factors promoting or inhibiting the practice.</p>	
Teachers' focus discussions	<p>Conceptualisation of leadership, learning, dialogue, accountability, and emerging themes such as common good, teacher agency, relationship between physical facilities, interpersonal relationships and learning, role of modern technology.</p> <p>Practising leadership, learning, etc</p> <p>Factors promoting or inhibiting the practice.</p>	

## Appendix 10. Classroom observation coding scheme

LfL principle	Score				
<i>Focus on learning (indicators)</i>	Outstanding = 5	Very good = 4	Good = 3	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 1
<b>1. Enthusiasm</b>	Teacher and pupils show great enthusiasm or interest in teaching-learning activity: teacher is engaging, maintains pupils' attention throughout the lesson. Pupils show great interest in the learning by asking questions, making active contribution, eager to exhibit their literacy and numeracy skills in class including the low achievers and introverts	Teacher and pupils show enthusiasm in teaching-learning activity: teacher is engaging and maintains pupils' attention throughout the lesson. Pupils show considerable level of interest in the learning by asking questions, making active contribution especially the high and medium achievers.	Teacher and pupils show enthusiasm in teaching-learning activity: teacher maintains pupils' attention throughout the lesson. Pupils show interest in the learning especially the high achievers.	Teacher and pupils show enthusiasm in teaching-learning activity: teacher maintains pupils' attention through most of the lesson. Pupils show little interest in the lesson but do not sleep or sit on their books.	Teacher and pupils show very little enthusiasm in teaching-learning activity. Teacher is unable to engage pupils, and pupils appear tired and disturbed throughout the lesson. Pupils sleep or do their own things. Pupils sit on their books

<b>2. Encouragement</b>	Teacher talks with pupils about the extreme importance of learning (two or more references about the value of learning or why they are learning). Teacher helps pupils make connections about what and how they learn. Encourages pupils to take risk in their learning and own it. Teacher challenges the pupils to learn in and outside the classroom (making good use of free time, e.g peer tutoring. Teacher motivates, encourages, applauds and congratulates pupils	Teacher talks with pupils about the importance of learning. Teacher helps pupils make connections about what and how they learn. Teacher motivates, encourages, applauds and congratulates pupils	Teacher talks with the pupils about what and how they learn. Teacher motivates, encourages, applauds and congratulates pupils	Teacher motivates, encourages, applauds and congratulates pupils	Teacher teaches without any encouragement
<b>3. Teacher professionalism</b>	Teacher is relaxed and demonstrates real strong predilection (excellent positive attitude for teaching and learning). Teacher is neatly and decently dressed and serves as a role model for the pupils. Teacher interacts very well with all pupils (is patient and listens to them).	Teacher is relaxed and demonstrates positive attitude for teaching and learning. Teacher is neatly and decently dressed and serves as a role model for the pupils. Teacher interacts well with most pupils (is patient and listens to them).	Teacher is relaxed, neatly and decently dressed; and serves as a role model for the pupils. Teacher interacts with some pupils (is patient and listens to them).	Teacher interacts with few pupils (patient with one or two). Teacher complains about teaching and is eager to leave the class before time or once the bell goes.	Teacher is not relaxed while teaching; interacts with only few pupils she or he likes; always complains about teaching and tends to demotivate the learning of the pupils. Teacher throws chalk to or at pupils.

<b>4. Teacher and pupil behaviour</b>	Teacher and pupils exhibit high sense of decorum in speech and maturity in behaviour (high sense of mutual sensitivity, forethought, and integrity – attentiveness to learning leading to no scolding by teacher). Teacher can defuse tension in class through sense of humour.	Teacher and pupils exhibit a decorum in speech and maturity in behaviour (a good level of mutual sensitivity, forethought, and integrity – attentiveness to learning leading to no scolding by teacher. No more than one incident).	Teacher and pupil exhibit decorum in speech and behaviour sometimes especially in terms of respect for others – No more than two incidents	Teacher and pupils occasionally exhibit decorum in speech and behaviour – Three or more incidents	Teacher and pupils show no sense of decorum in speech and show lack of prudence in utterances. Teacher is harsh in his/her tone in addressing the pupils. Pupils throw objects like chalk or pen at others in class
<b>5. Presenting teaching and learning activities</b>	Teacher organizes teaching and learning activities sequentially and logically; uses varied pedagogical skills, is creative and innovative (combines at least three teaching methods like lecture, demonstration, discussions, use of real world objects, teacher promotes critical thinking and always ready for questions from the pupils; pupils ask questions, go to chalk board to solve problems, make contributions to the lesson). High, medium, low achievers, introvert and extrovert pupils participate in the lesson (at least three categories).	Teacher organizes teaching and learning activities sequentially, logically; uses varied pedagogical skills, is creative and innovative (combines at least two teaching methods like lecture, demonstration, discussions, teacher promotes critical thinking but does not necessarily take questions); high, medium, low achievers, introvert and extrovert pupils participate in the lesson (at two categories).	Teacher organizes teaching and learning sequentially and logically; teacher uses predominantly one pedagogical skill; (teaching methods like lecture, demonstration, discussions); mostly high or medium achievers participate.	Teacher organizes teaching and learning activities sequentially but does all the work and the pupils merely comply	Teacher does not organise teaching and learning activities sequentially and logically. Teacher presents the teaching as if the pupils are empty slates with no useful experiences to offer to the teaching and learning

<b>6. Time Management</b>	The teacher makes maximum use of the allocated time (does not go off topic); Teacher does not force to achieve all the aims and objectives of the lesson within the contact period but moves at a pace that is beneficial to all the pupils (high, medium and low achievers are catered for)	The teacher makes maximum use of the allocated time (does not go off topic); teacher does not force to achieve all the aims and objectives of the lesson within the contact period but moves at the pace that is beneficial to some of the pupils (high and medium achievers keep up)	Teacher does not force to achieve all the aims and objectives of the lesson within the contact period but moves at a pace that is beneficial to some of the pupils (high achievers keep up)	Teacher forces to achieve all the aims and objectives of the lesson within the contact period and leaves no time for questions, interaction or pupils' participation	Teacher forces to achieve all the aims and objectives of the lesson within the contact period. Teacher ignores the pupils and does not care if they understand or not
<b>7. Mastery of subject matter</b>	Teacher exhibits excellent command of the subject matter (solves problems, represents concepts in multiple ways, e.g giving exercises, communicates with ease, gives precise responses and information, and exudes confidence – four or five of these present); relates subject content to pupils' experiences and to the real world (applying or linking topic to practical instances of everyday life)	Teacher exhibits very good command of the subject matter (solves problems, represents concepts in multiple ways, e.g giving exercises, communicates with ease, gives precise responses and information, and exudes confidence – three of these present); relates subject content to pupils' experiences and to the real world (applying or linking topic to practical instances of everyday life)	Teacher exhibits good command of the subject matter (solves problems, represents concepts in multiple ways, e.g giving exercises, communicates with ease, gives precise responses and information, and exudes confidence – two of these present)	Teacher exhibits an average command of the subject matter (solves problems, represents concepts in multiple ways, e.g giving exercises, communicates with ease, gives precise responses and information, and exudes confidence – one of these present)	Teacher exhibits inadequate subject-matter content knowledge and avoids questions

LfL principle	Score				
<i>A conducive environment for learning (indicators)</i>	Outstanding = 5	Very good = 4	Good = 3	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 1
<b>1. Pupils' regularity</b>	Pupils are always regular, they are always present to the lessons. 95-100 per cent of pupils are present for lessons. Atmosphere of class on pupils' arrival is very good and settled with one or two peer consultations in preparation for start of the lesson	Pupils are always regular, they are always present to the lessons. 85-94 per cent of pupils are present for lessons. Atmosphere of class on pupils arrive is good and pupils settled with one or two niggles	Pupils are regular but not always. 74-84 per cent present for lessons. Good atmosphere of class on pupils' arrival but it takes a while to settle because of lots of niggles. No major incident though	Pupils are sometimes regular and sometimes not. 50-73 per cent of pupils are present for lesson. Atmosphere of class on pupils' arrival is a bit chaotic and takes time to settle to the lesson	Less than 50 per cent of pupils are present for lesson. Atmosphere of class on pupils' arrival is very unsettled with loud noise because of an incident from previous lesson or from the playground
<b>2. Pupils' punctuality</b>	Pupils are always punctual, with 95-100 per cent in or on time for lessons.	Most Pupils are always punctual, with 85-94 per cent of them on time for lessons and only very few are a minute or two late.	Some pupils are punctual with 74-84 per cent of them arriving on time for lesson and the rest arriving 3-5 minutes late.	Pupils are sometimes punctual and sometimes not, with 50-73 per cent of them arriving on time and the rest arriving 5 or more minutes late.	Less than 50 per cent of the pupils arrive in class on time. Most of them arrive 10 or more minutes late and showing lack of interest in learning by making loud noise or doing other things other than getting ready for the lesson.
<b>3. Teacher regularity and punctuality</b>	Teacher is consistently present and is always in or on time to start the lesson	Teacher is consistently present and on time except on very few (one or two) occasions that he or she is late or absent but already notifies class prefect to inform pupils and makes arrangement for peer-tutoring	Teacher is mostly present but sometimes late for about 3-5 minutes	Teacher is sometimes present and sometimes punctual but 5-10 minutes late	Most of the time the teacher is absent and about 15 or more minutes late when present



<b>4. Atmosphere upon teacher's arrival</b>	Atmosphere of class upon teacher's arrival is very positive, with pupils happy and ready for work. Pupils show excitement on sighting the teacher and are eager to learn. Teacher shows from body language joy to be with the pupils for the lesson. Pupils immediately feel at home	Atmosphere of class upon teacher's arrival is very positive, with pupils happy and ready for work. Pupils show excitement on sighting the teacher	Atmosphere of class upon teacher's arrival is positive. Some pupils show joy on sighting the teacher	Atmosphere of class upon teacher's arrival is neutral, neither warm nor cold. Pupils exhibit indifferent attitude towards the teacher	Atmosphere of class upon teacher's arrival is very negative, pupils were cold toward the teacher and vice versa. Pupils become mute, indignant or walk out of the class
<b>5. Atmosphere during lesson</b>	Atmosphere during lesson is very positive and enthusiastic, very good feeling in the classroom. Pupils are at ease with one another and teacher and were active. Teacher establishes a purposeful learning environment, interacts with students, uses pupils' ideas, encourages co-operative learning, freedom of expression and monitors pupils learning activities. Classroom atmosphere is charged with respect, responsibility, integrity, resilience and harmony	Atmosphere during lesson is very positive and enthusiastic, very good feeling in the classroom. Pupils are at ease with one another and teacher and are active. Teacher establishes a purposeful learning environment, interacts with pupils, uses student ideas, and monitors pupils learning activities	Atmosphere during lesson is positive. Teacher establishes a purposeful learning environment, and monitors pupils learning activities	Atmosphere during lesson is a mix bag of positive and negative feelings. Some pupils are at ease with teacher and others tensed, quiet and ready to comply with, some pupils looking isolated.	Atmosphere during lesson is negative: with individual pupils doing their own thing, squabbling, insulting, caning, no collaboration, almost disengaged. Teacher tries to establish a learning environment but interaction with pupils is not directed towards learning
<b>6. Atmosphere at end of lesson</b>	Atmosphere at the end of the lesson is very positive and enthusiastic, really good feeling in the classroom: pupils want the lesson to continue. Pupils unanimously say to teacher; 'thank you, see you tomorrow'. Teacher talks to pupils about what and how they are to learn at home.	Atmosphere at the end of the lesson was very positive and enthusiastic, really good feeling in the classroom: pupils want the lesson to continue	Atmosphere at the end of the lesson was positive. Most pupils were happy	Atmosphere at the end of the lesson was neutral. No expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction	Atmosphere at the end of the lesson was unsettled with lots of feeling of dissatisfaction. Both teacher and pupils are glad that the lesson is ended

LfL principle	Score				
<i>Creating a learning dialogue</i> (indicators)	Outstanding = 5	Very good = 4	Good = 3	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 1
<b>1. Classroom participation</b>	Questions are always posed before pupils are called to answer. Teacher poses questions fairly among introverts, extroverts, high, medium, and low achievers. Pupils make a fair attempt to respond to questions.	Questions are always posed before pupils are called to answer. Teacher poses questions among introverts, extroverts, high, medium, and low achievers. Pupils make a fair attempt to respond to questions. Four instances observed	Questions are often posed before pupils are called to answer. Teacher poses questions among introverts, extroverts, high, medium, and low achievers. Pupils make a fair attempt to respond to questions. Three instances observed	Questions are sometimes posed before pupils are called to answer. Teacher poses questions among introverts, extroverts, high, medium, and low achievers. Pupils make a fair attempt to respond to questions. One or two instances observed	Pupils are called to answer questions before questions are posed. Pupils are indifferent about participation in classroom activities
<b>2. Teacher-pupils' disposition towards lessons</b>	Teacher is welcoming and friendly (smiling, positive tone, receptive to pupils' views), fair and firm (sensitive and considerate of all pupils). Teacher addresses pupils by their names. Pupils are responsive and friendly to the teacher (receptive to teacher). Pupils are responsive and friendly to their peers. All instances observed	Teacher is welcoming and friendly (smiling, positive tone, receptive to pupils' views), fair and firm (sensitive and considerate of all pupils). Teacher addresses pupils by their names. Pupils are responsive and friendly to the teacher (receptive to teacher). Pupils are responsive and friendly to their peers. Any four instances observed	Teacher is welcoming and friendly (smiling, positive tone, receptive to pupils' views), fair and firm (sensitive and considerate of all pupils). Teacher addresses pupils by their names. Pupils are responsive and friendly to the teacher (receptive to teacher). Pupils are responsive and friendly to their peers. Any three instances observed	Teacher is welcoming and friendly (smiling, positive tone, receptive to pupils' views), fair and firm (sensitive and considerate of all pupils). Teacher addresses pupils by their names. Pupils are responsive and friendly to the teacher (receptive to teacher). Pupils are responsive and friendly to their peers. Any two instances observed	Teacher is welcoming and friendly (smiling, positive tone, receptive to pupils' views), fair and firm (sensitive and considerate of all pupils). Teacher addresses pupils by their names. Pupils are responsive and friendly to the teacher (receptive to teacher). Pupils are responsive and friendly to their peers. Only one instance observed

<b>3. Challenge</b>	Teacher challenges pupils to think critically (through encouragement, probing, prompting, questioning). Teacher probes pupils' responses. Pupils are responsive when their contributions are probed (by attempting to provide answers). Pupils ask or respond to provocative and challenging questions, are able to disagree with teacher or peers, and give or ask for justification. All instances observed	Teacher challenges pupils to think critically (through encouragement, probing, prompting, questioning). Teacher probes pupils' responses. Pupils are responsive when their contributions are probed (by attempting to provide answers). Pupils ask or respond to provocative and challenging questions, are able to disagree with teacher or peers, and give or ask for justification. Any five instances observed	Teacher challenges pupils to think critically (through encouragement, probing, prompting, questioning). Teacher probes pupils' responses. Pupils are responsive when their contributions are probed (by attempting to provide answers). Pupils ask or respond to provocative and challenging questions, are able to disagree with teacher or peers, and give or ask for justification. Any four instances observed	Teacher challenges pupils to think critically (through encouragement, probing, prompting, questioning). Teacher probes pupils' responses. Pupils are responsive when their contributions are probed (by attempting to provide answers). Pupils ask or respond to provocative and challenging questions, are able to disagree with teacher or peers, and give or ask for justification. Any two or three instances observed	Teacher challenges pupils to think critically (through encouragement, probing, prompting, questioning). Teacher probes pupils' responses. Pupils are responsive when their contributions are probed (by attempting to provide answers). Pupils ask or respond to provocative and challenging questions, are able to disagree with teacher or peers, and give or ask for justification. Only one instance observed
<b>4. Support</b>	Teacher protects all pupils including the quiet and vulnerable pupils. Teacher shows appreciation to pupils for their effort to answer or ask questions (eg by commending or asking peers to applaud each other/teacher). Pupils show care for one another (eg by assisting the low achievers, visually impaired, sharing text books, pens, pencil with colleagues). Pupils support their teacher (by behaving well). All instances observed	Teacher protects all pupils including the quiet and vulnerable pupils. Teacher shows appreciation to pupils for their effort to answer or ask questions (eg by commending and asking peers to applaud each other). Pupils show care for one another (eg by assisting the low achievers, visually impaired, sharing text books, pens, pencil with colleagues). Pupils support their teacher (by behaving well). Any three instances observed	Teacher protects all pupils including the quiet and vulnerable pupils. Teacher shows appreciation to pupils for their effort to answer or ask questions (eg by commending and asking peers to applaud each other). Pupils show care for one another (eg by assisting the low achievers, visually impaired, sharing text books, pens, pencil with colleagues). Pupils support their teacher (by behaving well). Any two instances observed	Teacher protects all pupils including the quiet and vulnerable pupils. Teacher shows appreciation to pupils for their effort to answer or ask questions (eg by commending and asking peers to applaud each other). Pupils show care for one another (eg by assisting the low achievers, visually impaired, sharing text books, pens, pencil with colleagues). Pupils support their teacher (by behaving well). Only one instance observed	Lack of attentiveness to pupils' needs for protection, appreciation, and care on the part of the teacher

<b>5. Mutual confidence</b>	Pupils and teacher are willing to learn from each other (eg by accepting correction, sharing ideas, giving considerations to different views). Teacher instils the 'you can-do it' spirit in pupils by explicitly expressing that they can improve. Pupils trust the competence of the teacher (by being attentive, showing mutual respect). Pupils value the contributions of their peers (by listening, interrogating each other). All instances observed	Pupils and teacher are willing to learn from each other (eg by accepting correction, sharing ideas, giving considerations to different views). Teacher instils the 'you can-do it' spirit in pupils by explicitly expressing that they can improve. Pupils trust the competence of the teacher (by being attentive, showing mutual respect). Pupils value the contributions of their colleagues (by listening, interrogating each other). Any three instances observed	Pupils and teacher are willing to learn from each other (eg by accepting correction, sharing ideas, giving considerations to different views). Teacher instils the 'you can-do it' spirit in pupils by explicitly expressing that they can improve. Pupils trust the competence of the teacher (by being attentive, showing mutual respect). Pupils value the contributions of their colleagues (by listening, interrogating each other). Any two instances observed	Pupils and teacher are willing to learn from each other (eg by accepting correction, sharing ideas, giving considerations to different views). Teacher instils the 'you can-do it' spirit in pupils by explicitly expressing that they can improve. Pupils trust the competence of the teacher (by being attentive, showing mutual respect). Pupils value the contributions of their colleagues (by listening, interrogating each other). Only one instance	A general absence of willingness for mutual learning
-----------------------------	---	--	--	---	--

LfL principle	Score				
	Outstanding = 5	Very good = 4	Good = 3	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 1
<b>A shared leadership (indicators)</b>					
<b>1. Opportunity for participation in classroom decisions</b>	Pupils always get the opportunity to participate in decisions (eg. 4 out of 4 instances/incidents). Pupils are able to organise around activities, speak and negotiate confidently. Teacher and pupils respect each other's divergent ideas	Pupils often get the opportunity to participate in decisions (eg. 3 out of 4 incidents). Pupils are able to organise around activities, speak and negotiate confidently. Teacher and pupils respect each other's divergent ideas	Pupils occasionally get the opportunity to participate in decisions (eg. 2 out of 4 incidents). Pupils are able to organise around activities, speak and negotiate confidently.	Pupils rarely get the opportunity to participate in decisions (eg. 1 out of 4 incidents). Pupils are able to organise around activities, speak and negotiate confidently.	Pupils never get the opportunity to participate in decisions.
<b>2. Opportunity for creativity and talent expression</b>	Teacher and pupils show multiple creative ways of expressing talents (for example, pupils get the opportunity to use original ideas like maths problem-solving formulae, story writing, science innovations.) The lesson appeals to different domains of learning (cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor – all the four domains)	Teacher and pupils show different creative ways of expressing talents (for example, pupils get the opportunity to use original ideas like maths problem-solving formulae, story writing, science innovations.). The lesson appeals to different domains of learning (cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor – three of the domains)	Teacher and pupils show different creative ways of expressing talents (for example, pupils get the opportunity to use original ideas like maths problem-solving formulae, story writing, science innovations.). The lesson appeals to different domains of learning (cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor –two of the domains)	Teacher and pupils show different creative ways of expressing talents (for example, pupils get the opportunity to use original ideas like maths problem-solving formulae, story writing, science innovations.). The lesson appeals to different domains of learning (cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor – one of the domains)	Teacher and pupils do not show creativity. The lesson appeals to one domain of learning (cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor – one of the domains)
<b>3. Taking the lead appropriate to task</b>	Pupils take the lead in carrying out their roles as class representatives, cupboard overseers, bell pupils, and enthusiastically without prompting from the teacher.	Pupils take the lead in carrying out their roles as class representatives, cupboard overseers, bell pupils, and enthusiastically	Pupils take the lead in carrying out their roles as class representatives, cupboard overseers, bell pupils, and reluctantly	Pupils take the lead in carrying out their roles as class representatives, cupboard overseers, bell pupils, and begrudgingly after	Pupils do not execute assigned roles

		but only after being reminded by the teacher.	after being reminded by the teacher.	being reminded by the teacher two or more times.	
<b>4. Recognition and appreciation of different experiences and talents</b>	Teacher and pupils recognise and appreciate the experiences, abilities and contributions of everyone: high, medium, and low achievers. Pupils actively listen to each other without interruption.	Teacher and pupils recognise and appreciate the experiences, abilities and contributions of high, medium, and low achievers	Teacher and pupils recognise and appreciate the experiences, abilities and contributions of the high and medium achievers	Teacher and pupils recognise and appreciate the experiences, abilities and contributions of the high achievers	Teacher and pupils recognise and appreciate the experiences, abilities and contributions of the teacher. Experiences of the pupils are not that valued
<b>5. Teaming with different pupils and groups</b>	Class groupings comprise high, medium, low achievers, introverts and extroverts – all the five. Pupils may or may not feel free to team up with pupils from other groups in the learning activities and appreciate mutual support, free and easy sharing of ideas	Class groupings comprise high, medium, low achievers, introverts and extroverts – any three. Pupils may or may not feel free to team up with pupils from other groups in the learning activities and appreciate mutual support, free and easy sharing of ideas	Class groupings comprise high, medium, low achievers, introverts and extroverts – any two. Pupils may or may not feel free to team up with pupils from other groups in the learning activities and appreciate mutual support, free and easy sharing of ideas	Class groupings are based on ability levels. Pupils may or may not feel free to team up with pupils from other groups in the learning activities and appreciate mutual support, free and easy sharing of ideas	Class groupings are not used. Pupils turn to work individually
<b>6. Nurturing of freedom of expression and taking responsibility</b>	Classroom culture always nurtures freedom of expression and taking of responsibility. Pupils feel free to express and justify their opinions – making comments and asking questions (eg. 4 out of 4)	Classroom culture often nurtures freedom of expression and taking of responsibility. Pupils feel free to express and justify their opinions (eg 3 out of 4)	Classroom culture sometimes nurtures freedom of expression and taking of responsibility. Pupils feel free to express and justify their opinions (2 out of 4)	Classroom culture rarely nurtures freedom of expression and taking of responsibility. Pupils feel free to express and justify their opinions (eg 1 out of 4)	Classroom culture never nurtures freedom of expression and pupils only comply to whatever the teacher says.

LfL principle	Score				
A shared accountability (indicators)	Outstanding = 5	Very good = 4	Good = 3	Satisfactory = 2	Poor = 1
1. Pupils’ responsiveness to class exercises	All pupils participate whenever class exercises is given; they take their books, do the exercises and readily submit them for marking or get them ready for the teacher to move to the desks to mark them one after the other	Most pupils show enthusiasm whenever class exercise is given. They quickly take their books, do the exercises and readily submit them or make them available for the teacher to move to the desks to mark them one after the other. Only one or two pupils seem not to participate	A good number of pupils show enthusiasm whenever class exercise is given. They make the effort to do the exercise for the teacher to mark. Only three or four pupils seem not to participate	Some pupils show enthusiasm whenever class exercise is given. They make the effort to do the exercise for the teacher to mark. Only five or six pupils seem not to participate	Pupils show no interest in class exercises. They see them as a burden and few of them reluctantly do the exercises. Or lesson observed offered no opportunity for class exercises
2. Giving and assessing exercises	Teacher intersperses short class exercises within the lesson especially after a difficult sub-section of a topic. The teacher makes sure he or she assesses the exercises including those of high, medium and low achievers (different approaches can be used for marking) <sup>18</sup> Teacher ends lesson by given pupils homework	Teacher intersperses short class exercises within the lesson especially after a difficult sub-section of a topic. The teacher makes sure he or she assesses the exercises including those of selected high and medium achievers. The teacher ends the lesson by given pupils homework	Teacher intersperses short class exercises within the lesson especially after a difficult sub-section of a topic. The teacher makes sure he or she assesses those of selected high achievers. The teacher ends the lesson by given pupils homework	Teacher gives a class exercise towards the end of lesson but unable to assess before lesson is over.	Teacher just continues teaching without checking pupils’ understanding through a class exercise. He or she relies on the chorus answer ‘Yes Sir or Madam’ responses
3. Responsible handling of teaching and learning materials	Teacher and pupils handle teaching and learning materials: textbooks, note books, etc with care. Pupils treat the classroom furniture and walls with gentility by not defacing (eg writing on) them	Teacher and pupils handle teaching and learning materials: textbooks, note books, etc with care. Only one or two children show instances of defacing a	Teacher and pupils handle teaching and learning materials: textbooks, note books, etc with care. Three or four children show instances of defacing a	Teacher and pupils handle teaching and learning materials: textbooks, note books, etc with care. Five or six children show instances of defacing a	Teacher and pupils do not handle teaching and learning materials with care.

		book or furniture or walls	book or furniture or walls	book or furniture or walls	
<b>4. Attention to evidence rather than hearsay</b>	Teacher and pupils show the habit of respectfully probing contributions in class to get evidence rather than taking anything based on hearsay. Pupils ask their colleagues or teacher to provide the source of their answer. Seven or more instances observed	Teacher and pupils show the habit of respectfully probing contributions in class to get evidence rather than taking anything based on hearsay. Pupils ask their colleagues or teacher to provide the source of their answer. Five or six instances observed	Teacher and pupils show the habit of respectfully probing contributions in class to get evidence rather than taking anything based on hearsay. Pupils ask their colleagues or teacher to provide the source of their answer. Three or four instances observed	Teacher and pupils show the habit of respectfully probing contributions in class to get evidence rather than taking anything based on hearsay. Pupils ask their colleagues or teacher to provide the source of their answer. One or two instances observed	Teacher and pupils do not probe contributions in class to get evidence nor is the teacher comfortable with probing, and discourages it in class
<b>5. Evaluation of classroom ethos</b>	Pupils clearly challenge each other to observe personal and communal decorum in class (eg calling out peers who are disrespectful to each other or the teacher or commending peers for their exemplary behaviour). Pupils express their feelings explicitly about the teacher at the beginning and ending of the lesson by showing joy/ excitement or coldness. Teacher promotes atmosphere of belongingness, connectedness, trustworthiness and mutual correction. All four descriptors are observed	Pupils clearly challenge each other to observe personal and communal decorum in class (eg calling out peers who are disrespectful to each other or the teacher or commending peers for their exemplary behaviour). Pupils express their feelings explicitly about the teacher at the beginning and ending of the lesson by showing joy/ excitement or coldness. Teacher promotes	Pupils clearly challenge each other to observe personal and communal decorum in class (eg calling out peers who are disrespectful to each other or the teacher or commending peers for their exemplary behaviour). Pupils express their feelings explicitly about the teacher at the beginning and ending of the lesson by showing joy/	Pupils clearly challenge each other to observe personal and communal decorum in class (eg calling out peers who are disrespectful to each other or the teacher or commending peers for their exemplary behaviour). Pupils express their feelings explicitly about the teacher at the beginning and ending of the lesson by showing joy/ excitement or coldness. Teacher promotes	Teacher and pupils do not evaluate class experiences. Teacher and pupils care little about whether pupils are improving or not, and whether the teaching and learning activity is improving or not.

<sup>18</sup> These approaches include teachers moving through the desks marking, or assigning marking scheme to pupils to mark each other's exercises, or to collect the books and sit down to mark.



		atmosphere of belongness, connectedness, trustworthiness and mutual correction. Any three descriptors are observed	excitement or coldness. Teacher promotes atmosphere of belongness, connectedness, trustworthiness and mutual correction. Any two descriptors are observed	atmosphere of belongness, connectedness, trustworthiness and mutual correction. Any one descriptors are observed	
<b>6. Attention to sustainability &amp; leaving legacy</b>	Pupils are encouraged to share what they learn with others; some of the talented pupils take the initiative to sketch teaching and learning aids and post them on the walls of the class for the present and future use, taught to address all others with respect, give and accept corrections, and support others. All four instances observed	Pupils are encouraged to share what they learn with others; some of the talented pupils take the initiative to sketch teaching and learning aids and post them on the walls of the class for the present and future use, taught to address all others with respect, give and accept corrections, and support others. Any three instances observed	Pupils are encouraged to share what they learn with others; some of the talented pupils take the initiative to sketch teaching and learning aids and post them on the walls of the class for the present and future use, taught to address all others with respect, give and accept corrections, and support others. Any two instances observed	Pupils are encouraged to share what they learn with others; some of the talented pupils take the initiative to sketch teaching and learning aids and post them on the walls of the class for the present and future use, taught to address all others with respect, give and accept corrections, and support others. Any one instances observed	Teacher and pupils only pay attention only to their present personal needs and have no time for the future.

# **Appendix 11. Sample of an observation grid: creating a learning dialogue**

LfL principle	Score				
	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Creating a learning dialogue</i> (indicators)					
<b>1. Classroom interaction</b>					
<b>2. Teacher-pupils' disposition lessons</b>					
<b>3. Challenge</b>					
<b>4. Support</b>					
<b>5. Mutual confidence</b>					

## Appendix 12. Summary of research analytic themes and sources

Summary statement or theme	Sources			
	Research questions	Literature	Field data	Personal insights/research memos
Participants were familiar with, and held shared perception about the LfL principles;	RQ1	1.Gardner (2004). <i>Changing minds</i> 2. Bate et al. (2005). <i>Towards a million change agents</i> 3. MacBeath & Dempster (2009). <i>Connecting leadership and learning</i> 4. Fullan (2016). <i>The new meaning of educational change</i>	Interviews, focus group discussions, observations and documentary analysis	Research memos
re-orientating attitudes and re-creating structures inspired communal embrace of the principles;	RQ2	1.Ampiah (2008). “Provision of quality basic education in Ghana” 2. Deutschman (2007). <i>Change or die</i> 3. Temperly and Parrs (2005). “Theory competition and process of Change” 4. Yeager and Dweck (2012). “Mindsets that promote resilience”	Interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary analysis	Research memos
collaborative or cooperative believing was a crucial lever for change implementation;	RQ2	1.MacBeath et al. (2018). <i>Strengthening the connections between leadership and learning</i> 2. Donkor (2010). “Parental involvement in education in Ghana” 3. Hattie (2015). <i>What works in education: politics of collaborative expertise</i>	Interviews, focus group discussions, observations and documentary analysis	Research memos
attitudinal change holds the key to other dimensions of change;	RQ3	1. Deutschman (2007). <i>Change or die</i> 2. Fullan (2015). <i>Freedom to change</i>	Interviews, focus group discussions and observations	Research memos
motivation and cordial relationships can to some extent overcome paucity of infrastructure;	RQ3	1.Fullan (2016). <i>The new meaning of educational change</i> 2. Swaffield & Dempster (2009). ‘A learning dialogue’ in J. MacBeath and N. Dempsters (eds) <i>Connecting leadership and learning</i> 3. Delors et al. (1996). <i>Delors report</i>	Interviews, focus group discussions, observations and documentary analysis	Research memos
ubiquity of household poverty, illiteracy and unemployment are key threats to change implementation; and	RQ4	1.Ghana statistical service (2015). <i>Poverty mapping report</i> 2. Ghana statistical service (2015). <i>National employment report</i> 3. Ministry of Employment (2014). <i>National employment policy</i>	Interviews, focus group discussions, observations and documentary analysis	Research memos
modern technology is both incentive and inhibition to school improvement initiatives	RQ3 & RQ4	1.Mante (2016). <i>Kumkum Bhagya</i> 2. Adia (2014). “Analysis of telenovelas in the Ghanaian media” 3. Porter et al. (2012). “Youth mobility and mobile phones in Africa”	Interviews, focus group discussions, observations	Research memos

